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The Week

SECRETARY Mellon's statement at the International Chamber of Commerce that what the industrial world really needs is higher purchasing power will be heartily endorsed by almost everyone. Advocates of wage reduction will reply, however, that in spite of the extent to which wage rates have been maintained, labor's purchasing power has been drastically curtailed by unemployment. If wage reductions, through their effect on production costs, would really stimulate sales, their result might easily be to enlarge purchasing power before long. This is the classical argument for wage cuts as a depression remedy. The principal trouble is that the cure—even if it works—leaves the patient weaker in the future, since when full employment returns, labor does not have as much purchasing power as if wages had never been pared down. It is easy to see that larger purchasing power on the part not only of labor but of farmers and all receivers of the smaller incomes is desirable. What is difficult is to know how to effectuate the policy. If our financial and political oracles, having at last admitted the desirability of large popular purchasing power, would set to work to see what must be done to our economy in order to get it, there would be real cause to throw our hats in the air.

AS PREDICTED, the curve of unemployment relief has kept on rising, reaching its highest point in the latest month reported—March, 1931. According to the Russell Sage Foundation, the relief distributed outside of institutions in this one month alone was more than $11,000,000 in eighty-one large cities. This does not include wages paid for made work, which bulked large in many cities. The total was 315 percent greater than in March, 1929, and 132 percent greater than in March, 1930. Those who keep warning us against "the dole" should take careful note that public agencies, supported out of taxation, distributed $7,332,000 for the direct relief of over 250,000 families in March, or about 72 percent of the relief here recorded. In some cities the percentage of public relief is over 90. The chief differences between this situation and that of the British dole are as follows: Here the taxpayer meets a much larger part of the expense, while the employer as such pays nothing except what he contributes to charity; the relief is distributed in a more haphazard and less efficient way; the tax burden falls on city real estate and rents rather than on a scientifically graduated national income tax; the relief is less adequate, likely to be ruinous to municipal financing, and comes to a sudden end in many localities, irrespective of the need. There is, moreover, no advance accumulation of unemployment-insurance funds to cushion the burden on public charity.

TWO purposes are attributed to the Federal Reserve Bank of New York in reducing the rediscount rate to the lowest point in history—1½ percent. One is to discourage the movement of unneeded gold to this country from other financial centers, by lowering the interest on funds placed in this market in comparison with what they could earn abroad. The other is to stimulate trade by forcing idle domestic money into the bond market, instead of allowing it to earn interest in the form of bank deposits. Success in the first is relatively easy if rates are not changed comparably abroad; the second purpose is more difficult to achieve, as has been shown by the record of the past months, when

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extraordinarily low rates have done little to revive business. The question is more of the safe demand for credit than of the supply or the price. A third result of the move, which has not been so much discussed, is virtually certain to occur, however. This is the furnishing of credit to the federal government at a very low cost. It is a distinct help to the administration's budget difficulties, in so far as the Treasury intends to finance the deficit by short-term borrowing. It will also reduce the permanent burden on the Treasury, if outstanding bonds at higher rates can be replaced with those yielding considerably less.

IT HAS become customary for the announcement of the Pulitzer prizes each year to be followed by a chorus of disapproval; and this year's is undoubtedly the loudest since the awards were established. Literary critics are lukewarm or mildly indignant over the selection of Margaret Ayer Barnes's "Years of Grace" for the novel prize. Most of the New York dramatic reviewers who have expressed themselves have been equally unenthusiastic about "Alison's House," Susan Glaspell's dramatization of the life of Emily Dickinson, though it is undoubtedly on a higher plane than Mrs. Barnes's book. The poetry prize has not been given for work produced during the year, nor to any new voice, but to Robert Frost, whose collected poems happen to have been published in 1930. Several of the prizes seem to show a pronounced political conservatism among at least a majority of the judges. The history prize "for the best book on the history of the United States," goes to Professor Bernadotte E. Schmitt for "The Coming of the War, 1914," a book which has hardly anything to do with America and one in which Professor Schmitt, almost alone among reputable historians in any country, still sticks to the weary old myth of German responsibility. The cartoon prize goes to Edmund Duffy of The Baltimore Sun for a drawing which certainly seems below his brilliant standard, and hardly representative of either his attitude or that of The Sun. Entitled "An Old Struggle Still Going On," it shows a Russian Communist vainly struggling to remove the cross from the top of a Greek Catholic church. The implication of the cartoon is historically incorrect, for a multitude of observers testify that the anti-religious campaign of the Soviet government is strikingly successful as regards the next generation—the only one the Communists care about.

DECIDEDLY surprising is the newspaper-editorial award, which goes to Charles S. Ryckman of The Fremont, Nebraska, Tribune, for an article entitled "The Gentleman from Nebraska." Put forward as a philosophic explanation of Nebraska's dislike of "the East," this article is a cruel and in our judgment wildly unwarranted attack upon Senator Norris, to whom The Tribune, a conservative Republican paper, is as much opposed as are the Nebraska bankers and power interests. Mr. Ryckman observes in his editorial that " the people of Nebraska would not listen to George Norris long enough to let him tell them how to elect a dog catcher in the smallest village in the state. . . . As far as the people of Nebraska are concerned, George Norris is as deep as the Atlantic Ocean in Washington and as shallow as the Platte River in his own state." Reading the entire editorial, of which these quotations are a fair sample, it is hard to see how it could interest any Pulitzer judge unless he happened to be so deeply prejudiced against Senator Norris that any stick used to beat that distinguished statesman looked like a good stick. . . . It is only fair to say that at least two of the three other awards were a little more reasonable. H. H. Knickerbocker won a prize with his series of articles in The New York Evening Post on Russia, a good job of reporting which ought not to be condemned because of the absurd title stuck on it, "The Red Trade Menace." Henry James won the biography prize with his life of President Eliot.

QUITE apart from the obvious use of the awards this year to make conservative propaganda, it is time, we think, to question seriously the philosophy which lies behind them. Annual prizes for creative work ought in general, we believe our readers will agree, to assist talent which is on its way up, and not to gild the sunset years of those already famous. Viewing the work of the Pulitzer committees as a whole and over a period of years, it is fair to say that they have been singularly insensitive to the new currents sweeping through American writing—that in nearly every instance they have played safe by giving their novel, drama and poetry prizes to "outstanding figures" who, however high their merits, need and are aided by the awards less than anybody else. Probably such a type of selection is inevitable when awards are made by large committees, heavily weighted for age and respectability; but certainly these committees and their supporters should not be surprised if the prizes are not taken seriously by those who now play the most important part in shaping our literature.

PROFESSOR Michelson, who died last week after a long illness, was particularly representative of that era of scientific research which was a necessary preliminary to the birth of Einstein's principle of relativity. It was an era of facts and measurements rather than of synthesis or speculation, and Professor Michelson was its out-standing product. He devoted practically his entire life determining the velocity of light; in fact his career might be summed up by the expression, 186, 213 miles per second. Yet though he regarded his researches in this field as his most significant achievement, to the disciples of Einstein the now

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famous Morley-Michelson experiment to discover the existence of ether drift was of far greater importance. It was the results of this experiment which, to paraphrase Kant's well known remark, awoke Einstein from his Newtonian slumbers. Whether Einstein could have developed his special theory of relativity without Michelson's experiments and Fitzgerald's interpretation of them, is a question which it would be futile to puzzle over. But there is no doubt that because of Professor Michelson's hunger after hard and unimaginative facts, he will be granted the honor of having created a scientific theory more imaginative and revolutionary than any since the days of Galileo.

AN IMPORTANT forward step has been taken by Yale with the announcement that candidates for the A.B. degree in Yale College henceforth will not be required to have completed either five years of Latin or four of Greek. Heretofore these students have found it necessary to do four years of Latin or three of Greek in preparatory school, plus at least one additional year of the same language in college. Since 1922, however, it has been possible to receive the degree of Bachelor of Philosophy (taken over at that time from the Sheffield Scientific School) by offering an equivalent amount of some modern language. This was an anomalous situation, the absurdity of which has long been recognized; it has now been rectified by abolishing the Ph.B. degree and changing the A.B. requirements. It will be said that this is a blow at the classics, but we do not see how this charge is justified. Anyone who wishes may still pursue such studies as far as he likes; and if they cannot survive on that basis, the conclusion is irresistible that they do not deserve to do so. Freedom for the student to select the subjects he will follow should be practised only within careful limitations; but the trend of educational theory is away from such concentration on the classics as Yale's former system demanded.

EVERY few weeks someone rises solemnly to say that instalment buying has come through the business depression in triumph. The percentage of persons who fail to complete their contracts is only slightly larger than before, and the instalment-credit houses have not gone into wholesale bankruptcy as some gloomy prophets predicted they would. But those who argue that instalment buying has thereby justified itself overlook one of the most important facts about it: namely, that the average family simply cannot afford to let its payments lapse as long as it can obtain funds from any source. If you have paid $500, say, toward the purchase of a thousand-dollar automobile, and are forced to default, you lose not only the car but the $500 already paid, and such a loss to most American households is a calamity. Everything possible will be done to prevent it: the family will skimp on food and clothing, on rent; it will sell other property or borrow from usurers to complete the payments. Nobody knows what may be the social cost of that record of fulfilled obligations to which the business world is pointing so proudly. As for the fundamental economics of the matter—the stimulation of buying along a few special lines, the diversion of expenditure from other lines, the freezing of family income over long periods in advance—all this is another and equally serious matter.

Mr. Backing-Both-Ways

PRESIDENT Hoover did not want the International Chamber of Commerce to talk about high tariffs, or reparations and war debts, or trade with Russia. This news came out before the Chamber met. The presidential taboo had its effect in softening the speeches made and the Chamber's declarations on such questions. Why did the administration take this attitude? Because it knew that influential opinion in the Chamber favors lowered tariffs, the scaling down of reparations and war debts, and trade with Russia, while the administration has all these questions decided in contrary fashion and cannot endure opposition.

The President, as usual, is at his best in saying No to everything, even to a frank expression of conviction. The trouble is, however, that in the matter of depression he says No to opposite questions. We at least have a right to expect him to be consistent. Is the depression international, or is it not? Must international prosperity be sought, or must we seek exclusive national prosperity?

At the opening of Congress last winter, when the President feared criticism of the administration's domestic policies as a cause of depression, when all sorts of new proposals for measures of national relief were about to be proffered, Mr. Hoover said in his annual message that the chief sources of depression were international. In a campaign speech in Boston, on October 15, 1928, Mr. Hoover had said, "Trade in its true sense is not commercial war; it is a vital national service. . . . Every nation loses by the poverty of another. Our prosperity has enabled us to make enormous increases in the purchases of goods from other nations. These increasing purchases have added prosperity and livelihood to millions of people abroad. And their prosperity in turn has enabled them to increase the amount of goods they can buy from us." If this is true in prosperity, is it not true also in depression? And if the depression is international, why silence discussion of the chief obstacles to international trade?

But Representative Ramseyer of Iowa, speaking with the endorsement of the Republican National Committee on the attitude of the International Chamber of Commerce, represents it as masking a conspiracy of Democratic leaders with foreign

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manufacturers and international bankers, attempting "to dictate to the United States what should be done for the enrichment of foreigners." He argues that we cannot "pull other nations out of the depression" except by "pushing the United States further in." This now appears to be the accepted doctrine of the administration. When international business authorities want to do something to promote international commerce and improve the purchasing power of the rest of the world, Mr. Hoover supports a policy of exclusive economic nationalism. He assumes that the Treasury and the taxpayers need war-debt payments more than the whole country needs a stimulus to world-wide trade. He implies that we must seek our economic salvation behind an almost impenetrable wall of tariff duties and embargoes.

If it is possible for an intelligent statesman to advocate such a policy, at least we have a right to ask him to accept its logical implications. If we prosper or suffer alone, then we must look for the sources of depression solely at home. The Republican party must bear its full share of responsibility for the domestic policies which have brought us to our knees. The very fact that foreign countries are depressed, according to the Ramseyer type of reasoning, ought to make us prosperous. The administration can have no foreign alibi for what has happened. It assumes the duty of rescuing us without waiting for something to turn up abroad. It has its tariff. It has its war-debt payments. It has its Russian embargoes. Still we have been suffering one of the worst depressions in history. The government, having isolated us, must do something to make the domestic economy behave as it should.

President Hoover, in adopting the position that our economy is independent from that of the rest of the world, has not the shadow of an excuse for his opposition to proposals like that of a loan of two or three billion dollars for a program of public construction, or an export debenture for agriculture, or a drastic reorganization of the coal industry. If a thoroughgoing protective policy is a sound recipe for prosperity, surely something is radically wrong with other aspects of our industrial system. The medicine does not work. The system does not respond.

It cannot be successfully maintained, in our opinion, that the relatively mild measures which the International Chamber wanted would really be sufficient to put the world economy on a sound basis. They would constitute little more than a clearing of the ground for more positive action. But that does not justify the President in rejecting them. For he rejects only to do nothing else. When confronted with proposals for domestic economic reform, he argues that depression is international; when confronted with proposals for international relief, he argues that prosperity must be domestic. He is a new and negative Janus, who turns, not his face but his back, in both directions at once.

They Hate New York

NEW YORK'S present municipal scandals have of course been the subject of extended comment in newspapers throughout the country; and that comment has served to illustrate again one of the significant facts about our recent social history—the dislike of the metropolis which is shared by so many of the inhabitants of other communities, near and wide.

This dislike comes from various causes, several of which may simultaneously motivate a single individual. It is now the result of a feeling of superiority, again the product of envy. In part, no doubt, it is the antagonism felt by great cities in any country toward the greatest, which they regard as an unfair competitor with themselves for the nation's chief resources, both physical and industrial. But in the case of New York there are specific American types of hostility which are worth examining separately.

Probably most important of all is the dislike by the "older American" for the new immigrant stock which makes up such a large part of New York's population. This was a significant element in the defeat of Al Smith in 1928; and it explains why one gentleman was several times elected Governor of Ohio on a platform the main plank in which was that he had never visited New York and pledged himself that he never would. This hostility in its active form is hardly distinguishable from the general dogmas of the Ku Klux Klan—and it must not be forgotten that while the Klan itself has faded away, its doctrines go marching on. Millions of people hate New York because it has many Jews, Irish and East Europeans; because a large part of its population professes the Catholic faith; because they consider (and quite correctly) that it is a stronghold of the forces opposed to prohibition. Curiously enough, they accuse New York of being responsible for the "new America" which they so much dislike—the America of jazz, speeding automobiles, wild youth and bathtub gin—though in fact Detroit has wrought a much more profound change in the material surface of life than New York has done or has wanted to do.

More specific charges, some of which are reasonably valid, are made against the metropolis by this group. They argue that New York is where the books and magazines are produced, so many of which they regard as demoralizing to the morals of youth. Probably half or more of the plays presented on Broadway come under the same ban. Many vulgar movies are made in or near the city, and even those which come from Hollywood, these critics say, are produced by companies owned in Wall Street. Not only does New York reach out and corrupt the young innocents of the rest of the country, but certain of the visitors to the metropolis fall into evil ways during their sojourn—and

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their families naturally blame the city and not the individual who relieves all his inhibitions in a glorious night-club jamboree. New York is the headquarters, they tell each other with sad head-shakings, of the bootleg traffic of America; it is the home of the dope rings and white slavers, the meeting place for depravity.

Another group, only partly identified with the foregoing, is that which opposes New York as being the center of the "money power." The Middle Western farmer has been taught that "Wall Street" is the cause of all his ills—and there is enough truth in the statement to make it cut deep. For it is true that most of the little group of men who wield the bulk of America's economic power live in New York, and the rest are closely connected with the city. Nowhere else does encrusted wealth display itself with so much arrogance, nowhere is the contrast between rich and poor so brutally complete. In a time of depression like the present, this feeling is intensified; and it will undoubtedly grow, as the centralization of power and wealth becomes more complete.

There are, to be sure, thousands of persons all over the United States who look upon New York enviously, and would give their souls to go and live there. If you are a writer, artist, actor, musician, it is difficult to have a successful career which does not involve at least a certain amount of residence there. For certain types of business men, and especially salaried executives without ownership, the prizes are in the metropolis, and those who are on their way up toward one of these will have a more kindly view of life in the big city than their neighbors. On the other hand, a member of any of the groups just mentioned, if he fails to reach his goal, is likely to vent his sense of inferiority by disliking the city.

What is true of these individuals is also true in a sense of whole communities. The West, in particular, is devoted to the gospel of growth-and-size, and the worst calamity to a city in that region is for the decennial census to report, not a loss but even a slower rate of expansion than had been expected. To such towns there is something irritating, not only about New York's gargantuan growth, but about her own indifference to the idols of the tribe. When they hear a New Yorker express a fervent wish that a million of his fellow townsmen would go away, they feel as a beggar might in the presence of a millionaire complaining of his cost of living.

As things are now developing, certain aspects of the animosity toward the metropolis seem likely to increase. As already suggested, concentration of capital in the hands of a few men and institutions, most of them in New York, goes on apace. There are no important signs of any decentralization of publishing, and in the drama, Broadway not only maintains but increases its overwhelming supremacy. Immigration has almost been halted, and therefore within a generation or two there should be a marked decrease in anti-Semitism and hostility to the foreign-born in general, which has been largely economic in origin, based on the competition which these individuals offered, at a lower standard of living, to American-born groups. But the Ku Kluxer will go on reciting his shibboleths for many years after they have lost their relevancy.

Perhaps the most important of the immediate factors in mitigation is the developing interest in a native culture which is already beginning to be seen here and there in America. It starts, perhaps, as a reaction against New York; but as it goes on it takes pride in itself and helps to break down the inferiority complex which causes so much of the hostility toward the metropolis. In Iowa, Texas, Montana, California, the young estheticians are beginning to study their local folkways, to attempt creation in terms of the parochial history. The little theatres are now and then presenting home-grown plays which, *mirabile dictu,* do not recite the loves of Pierrot, in blank verse, but tell of blizzards on the prairie or the wars between sheepmen and cattle raisers. In New Mexico, study of the Indian and attempts to imitate his tribal art are erected into a cult. Everyone now knows of the specialized interest in the South displayed by the group of young writers most of whom contributed to the recent symposium, "I'll Take My Stand." These developments are certainly to be welcomed, not only for their own sake, but for the healthy effect they will have upon our civilization. The standardization of American life has been a boon to manufacturers using mass-production methods; to national advertisers and to travelers intent on buying in Oshkosh the favorite style of collar they customarily purchase in Tuscaloosa; but the real benefits of mass production to the population as a whole are not inconsistent with a rich parochial culture in every region. When such cultures have definitely shown their existence, New York will no longer seem a leech fattening on the best blood of the hinterland, fresh spirit will be lent to the struggle against its financial "imperialism," and an important part of the present animosity will subside.

The Next Step in Latin America

THE PRESSURE which conservatives and militarists are bringing to bear upon the Hoover administration regarding the new Caribbean policy must be very great. Both Mr. Hoover and Mr. Stimson are devoting much time to explaining and defending it in their unofficial conversations with newspapermen and others, and Mr. Stimson has now returned to the subject in a special radio address, broadcast from coast to coast. In part, the deluge of protest was unnecessary, the

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result of Mr. Stimson's unhappy way of putting things. He could just as well have said, "We propose to protect Americans in Nicaragua Bigger and Better, bringing them down to the seacoast and guarding them there, under the shadow of Old Glory and the guns of Uncle Sam's watchdogs of the sea." If he had done so, some of the present protesters would probably be singing his praises. But others would not; for it is quite true that an important deflection of Caribbean policy has taken place. The Secretary of State shrewdly seeks to establish historic continuity by quoting his distinguished predecessor of twenty-five years ago, Elihu Root, who said that it is "the established policy of the United States not to use its army and navy for the collection of debts"; but everyone knows that this is exactly what has been happening more or less continuously under the last six Presidents.

Messrs. Hoover and Stimson have in fact made an excellent beginning at a new policy. They are sticking to their principle that the Marines shall be out of Nicaragua by the autumn of 1932, and they refuse in the meantime to police the whole country, on the practical plea that it is physically impossible to do this (even though Mr. Coolidge is supposed to have done it for a considerable period). The administration has also accepted in theory a policy of getting out of Haiti, though inexplicable delays have occurred in putting the plan into execution. In Panama we have morally, if not technically, repudiated the Central American doctrine associated with the name of Mr. Hughes, by permitting a violent revolution to take place under the noses of enough American soldiers to have spanked all the revolutionists and sent them supperless to bed. In South America, we have thrown away the similar Wilsonian doctrine and now recognize any government which actually rules a country, no matter how it got there. (Indeed, the only part of the world where we are still sticking to the old Presbyterian theory of infant damnation for governments whose *accouchement* we don't like, is Russia.) We have made our peace with Mexico over her radical land and oil legislation, in a compromise wherein not all the conceding was done south of the Rio Grande. And finally, the State Department some time ago published the text of a memorandum by which it proposes to be guided henceforth, tacitly promising that in the future the Monroe Doctrine will not be regarded as exclusively a unilateral American policy.

The last item on this list will probably prove the most important; though thus far the administration's deeds have failed to keep pace with its words. Excellent as are the individual items cited above, they are still things which we are doing to Latin American countries, not things in which we are coöperating with them. There may be some parts of the world where this would not matter, where practical results would be the only test; but anyone who thinks this is true in Hispano-America utterly misunderstands the Latin character. No matter how well we may behave, the Southern republics will continue to be dissatisfied and resentful as long as we insist on acting alone.

There is one practical step which the Hoover administration might take in the near future which would help immeasurably in convincing the Latins that we have actually changed our ways. In December, 1928, an important conference of the American states was held in Washington, an outgrowth of the Sixth Pan-American Conference at Havana almost a year earlier. At the conference in Washington, two important treaties were negotiated and signed by twenty nations, including the United States. One of these provided for conciliation, the other for arbitration. The two treaties of course supplement each other, and the two together are an important addition to that famous document, the Kellogg Anti-War Pact. The conciliation treaty provides machinery by which international disputes of any nature may be subjected to investigation, the good offices of third parties, and every possible effort toward amicable solution. The arbitration treaty is in some ways even more important, since the signatory powers agree to submit to arbitration for a wide range of international judicial questions (subject of course to such reservations as may be made by the various states).

The conciliation treaty was promptly approved by the United States Senate; but the arbitration treaty has suffered the same fate which is meted out to so many other agreements regarded by the Senate as coming too close to compulsory arbitration. It has been buried for more than two years. Mr. Hoover has hesitated to fight for it, just as he has let the World Court be pocketed, because he considers he is already in enough trouble with the Senate. But this is not the policy of a statesman. If in the coming session of Congress he will do his utmost to get the arbitration treaty adopted, Latin America will know that he is really serious in his announced policy of friendliness, even though he may not succeed in forcing the Senate to do his will.

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Business Leadership Passes the Buck

At the United States Chamber of Commerce Meeting

AMERICAN Business, definitely reported adrift in S. O. S. signals recently received by Dean Donham at Harvard, was beached by Captain Barnes and Bos'un Butterworth at Atlantic City a week ago, and the crew crawled ashore for prayers and provisions. Beyond the breakers and the sands was a bleak and rock-bound coast. "For rent" signs frowned from the boardwalk store fronts; the rolling-chair men slumbered in them beneath their own blankets; and the hotels, boarding an average of four old-lady guests apiece, greeted the shipwrecked mariners of commerce with "Welcome" signs and off-season rates. But there was plenty of taffy left over from last season, and hundreds of hungry and heart-sore business men gathered in the Auditorium in humble hope of hearing from their guides and mentors how they were going to get home along the long, long road to Tipperary and prosperity. For three days they sat patiently on the seats of their second pairs of pants waiting for The Plan which they plaintively expected their pilots from the Potomac to produce; and then they climbed into their pullmans with a pain in the neck and a bellyful of bilge.

Forest fires back of Atlantic City spread a haze through the atmosphere, and a stiff chilly gale beat up a heavy surf and buffeted the boardwalkers out of their easy saunters. But another cloud hung over this nineteenth annual convention of the United States Chamber of Commerce. The sunshine spread by its professional sun lamps of light and leading was pallid and thin. Another menacing undertone than that of the surf rumbled in its meeting halls, and not even the electrically amplified platitudes of the speakers could drown it out. One sensed that these men were anxious and frayed, frightened and almost desperate, and that if some speaker shouted "Boo" into the microphone they would have climbed up on their chairs. The Chamber had sloganed the ceremony with one of those familiar fake phrases, mouth-filling and meaningless: "Business Leadership and the Public," and Senator Couzens had caustically challenged this leadership to produce some plan to protect the public from unemployment if Congress were not to be compelled to do so. The Senator, though an accredited Chamber member, was not permitted to pass this embarrassing buck to it in person, but one had the fantastic feeling that the audience during those three days was unconsciously expecting and even hoping that he would turn up and do it anyway.

That at least would have broken the thin ice of smooth and slippery rhetoric on which the hand-picked speakers skated, and have revealed the cold realities of which everyone was acutely conscious. Never in all the nineteen years of its maneuvers, or at least in my memory of its meetings, has the Chamber let the rank and file of its membership, or the public, down so hard. Never has this massive machinery of organized industry, with its rings of round tables, its layers of committees and its mimeographed multiplication of millions of meaningless words of cut and dried speeches, seemed so silly, empty and useless, even to the audience. Never has the Voice of American Business sounded so husky, uncertain and insincere. And what is more significant, never before did so many of its supporters on the scene sense so surely the bankruptcy of its ideas, imagination and capacity for action, and count so accurately the consequences. When they went home they knew that nothing had happened or been said, and that they were in for whatever was coming.

Here, ready to use, was the most powerful megaphone conceivable for amplifying any constructive program that the administration might have prepared for presentation to organized business, the most powerful instrument it could have had to put such a program into action. If there had been any capacity for such a program, a preliminary conference and collaboration with the heads of the Chamber could have put it across through this convention in the most effective possible way. Yet there was no evidence of anything of the kind, except a casual letter from the President praising trade-association work in preserving prosperity, in face of the fact, painfully evident to every executive there, that the associations were shot to pieces and groping in the dark.

Saving against the Next Depression

Apart from the barefaced bunkum mechanically emitted by Chairman Barnes and President Butterworth, and the eternal diatribes against governmental interference in business discharged by the big guns of the Chamber, almost everything said at this meeting had the net effect of plunging the members more deeply into gloom than when they first forgathered. Neither official authorities, academic experts and financial fathers, nor their foreign colleagues, had a kind or encouraging word for them. They could neither explain nor promise anything. Of course, the little boys shouldn't cry; they would grow up by and by, because the country has always gone on and depressions have always ended sometime. Organized business "had met the test" —where and how, nobody said. It was "going forward"—where to, nobody mentioned. It was

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confronted by "complex problems" the nature of which nobody specified; but it would recover when the "necessary internal maladjustments" had been corrected, and enough "time" had elapsed. The Chamber was always receptive to new ideas, but the idea that anything could be done was not one of them. Things might not be so good here, Brother Barnes assured us, but they were worse in Russia, where the consumption of soap was far behind ours because of our individual initiative and self-reliance. There everybody had his ears washed for him; here we washed our own.

The herald from Washington, Secretary Lamont, brought no glad tidings and made no suggestions; but he did bring a carefully edited speech which had a certain interest for connoisseurs of political strategy. Between the lines it plainly warned the anxious acolytes of business to expect nothing very promising from the high priests or the gods. For the first time an administration official said publicly that this was the most severe depression in our business history; and that "the unemployment problem could not be solved by refusing to recognize its existence." For the first time, too, the administration practically repudiated its heretofore orthodox overproduction theory as the explanation of the depression. But whatever the causes—and no new explanation was offered—they were being corrected by Time and "the slow working of economic adjustments." The Secretary explicitly confessed that the administration had no plan of action and knew of none that would work. There was nothing that either government or industry could do. Even a billion-dollar building program was not powerful enough to restore purchasing power. The whole thing was very obscure and distressing, and in closing he advised the young business men of the audience to save their pennies for the next depression.

Commencing to Begin to Get Ready

The professors gave them even less cheer. In a whole evening devoted to discussion of "the possibilities of business stabilization," Professor Mitchell, as the academic high priest, laid the victim on the altar of economic analysis, explored its entrails with his logical scalpel, and found no favorable auguries. To the eager congregation he announced that there was probably no such thing as stabilization, and that it probably wouldn't be desirable anyway. If you succeeded in stabilizing one thing, like wages and employment, something else, like profits, would slip; and there you were; though the business men did not seem to be much impressed by the dire consequences of stable wages and employment. All that he could suggest by way of solace was that we ought first to commence to get ready to begin to prepare to study the problem of approaching the task of analyzing more scientifically the possibilities of undertaking to examine the question, etc. Professor Adams of Yale was less considerate of his crestfallen audience, and told them bluntly that there was no possibility of any sustained rise in security prices in the next five years, but rather that the prices of real estate, commodities and everything would decline for a long time to come, by will of God.

In some of the round tables several lesser academic oracles warned them that unemployment insurance and every sort of social legislation was around the corner waiting to get them if they didn't watch out, get busy and do something; and these warnings were the more impressive because they were seconded by several of the camarilla, like Filene, whose fire alarms were louder than the professors' and who were carefully kept away from the microphones in the main meetings. The lawyers, too, gave them little encouragement in their hopes of revising the anti-trust laws so that they might stabilize in safety without having the Department of Justice always upsetting the apple cart. The hobgoblin of greater governmental supervision and regulation as the price to be paid for such privileges was paraded before them to scare them out of this alley.

Home from Mecca

Finally, the head of the American Bankers' Association invited them to the mourners' bench with a sermon on their sins, follies and frailties. It was all their own fault, and labor's. They had overexpanded, overproduced, overspent, and there was no salvation but by thrift and hard work, saving and slaving, lowering living standards and returning to the fundamental principles of individual responsibility, self-help and regular deposits in the savings bank. This bleak gospel from a small-town savings banker of the Middle Western mission belt was slightly tempered by the Gallic gayety of a French banker who, at the closing dinner, told them that neither he nor anyone else had the least idea what this depression was all about, or what could be done about it, and advised them to enjoy themselves while they could.

And so the disappointed pilgrims turned home from Mecca on May Day, while their morning papers recorded the Communist demonstrations in every large city of the world. No one who sensed their sour state of mind could help wondering whether they will assemble next year on the shores of the Pacific with quite the same simple innocence and trust in their high priests and oracles. One need not be surprised if another year of immersion in the red ink bottle will have colored their minds a mild pink by next May. Many of these men, even now, were ready to "shoot the works." They have lost faith in their leaders, governmental, academic, legal and organizational. They have been waiting for others, and they are weary of waiting. An economic Mussolini, before many months have passed, could have them parading in red, white and blue shirts, and saluting some new symbol. But it will not be the bald head of Julius Barnes.

Virgil Jordan.

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The Last of the Victorians

FOR THE SECOND time one of the most singular and original personalities among the many strong men who have filled in modern times the office of Chancellor in England has contrived to produce a dull budget. If in any way it surprises, it is by allaying our fears. Mr. Snowden has himself heralded it by one of the gloomiest speeches that ever came from a Minister in office. It was known that there would be, after this year of bottomless depression, a startling deficit. The stern, drawn features of this unbending little man gave a shape to the nightmares of the average citizen, and everyone asked, Would it be income tax or beer or tobacco that would bear the blow? It has fallen on none of these things: indeed, one hardly hears the muffled stroke at all. The average man goes to his office rejoicing, and this unusual figure, whom men of property once likened to a Robespierre-in-waiting, retains the popularity that he won, when he emerged as a rough if emaciated John Bull at The Hague. It may not be an interesting budget, but it pleases the normal man by all but avoiding new or increased taxation.

It is true that the tax on gasoline is raised from eight to twelve cents a gallon, but as this follows a fall in price, it will not be resented. There may be grumbles at the very questionable device by which Mr. Snowden has juggled with the revenue from income tax. As the rate rose during the War, the merciful practice was adopted of levying it in two equal instalments, in January and July. Mr. Snowden proposes in future to draw three-fourths of it from us at the first slice. That will be unpleasant in January, but agreeable in July, and there is no doubt that the average citizen would rather help the Chancellor out of his embarrassments in this way than submit to a further increase in the crushing "standard" rate of twenty-two cents in the dollar (4s. 6d. in the pound). The other expedient by means of which Mr. Snowden has filled the chasm between income and expenditure is less dubious. The reforms which the Bank of International Settlement has effected in the method of paying debts across frontiers have borne their fruits. When Germany, France and Italy pay to England the sums which she must pass on to the United States, it will no longer be necessary to buy dollars in New York. A clerk will make entries in the ledgers at Basle, and the transfer is accomplished. It is therefore legitimate to reduce the big fund which Great Britain had kept across the Atlantic to finance these exchange transactions.

There is, one must admit, a certain neatness and simplicity in this performance, as in all the three budgets for which Mr. Snowden has been responsible. Mr. Churchill, in his place, would have invented the most fantastic taxes, and introduced some baffling novelty into the Treasury's system of accounting. Mr. Snowden is at least straightforward and plain-spoken, and no conservative could dread innovations with a sturdier hatred. One cannot imagine him taxing horse-racing bets, as the ingenious Mr. Churchill tried to do. He had to meet a deficit (in round figures) of $187,500,000. He raided the American Exchange Fund to the extent of $100,000,000. He gained $50,000,000 by anticipating the date of the income tax. He drew $37,000,000 from gasoline; and so the thing was done. The amusing part of it is, that only a correct and conscientious financier, trained in a rigid school, would have admitted to any deficit at all. For in this year of slump, with revenues dwindling and expenditure on relief mounting, Mr. Snowden has contrived to pay off no less than $262,500,000 of war debts. This rough-hewn man has principles, and into his finance he carries a horror of debt behind which there lies, one guesses, the experience of thrifty generations of self-respecting craftsmen in his native Yorkshire. He would use the financial crisis that must accompany the Last Trump to pay off debt, and even in this year of ordeals, this has been his overmastering concern. Not content with satisfying the exacting demands of the Sinking Fund in his own two years, he must needs turn back and make good the payments which the thriftless Mr. Churchill omitted. It is a startling, though one may not think it a wise, achievement.

This budget, precisely because it is dull, and makes in no direction a creative innovation, may earn for itself a place in history. It has a note of finality. Does it mark the end of an epoch? Is it the last free-trade budget which an English Chancellor will introduce? There are symptoms in it which are difficult to interpret otherwise. There were in this deficit no exceptional items. It will be repeated in the years to come, unless trade mends considerably, or unless we should elect to court the growth of a revolutionary temper by cutting down the "dole." But Mr. Snowden's two chief expedients are maneuvers which cannot be repeated. If he, or another, should find himself, next year, in this same plight, there will no longer be an American Exchange Fund to raid, and if he should dare to levy the whole income tax, instead of three-quarters, at one swoop, even that rash action would save him only once again. Given the principles and outlook of Mr. Snowden and his school, is any way of escape open? He is adamant over debt reduction. He abhors indirect taxes; above all, taxes on food. And yet, even with a

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working-class party behind him, he seems to consider that in direct taxation the limit has been reached. He has added, in this testing year, nothing to any of the burdens that the middle and upper classes carry, neither to the steeply graduated income tax, nor to the supertax on great incomes, nor even to the death duties which are slowly breaking up the accumulation of the old landed families. It is not courage that he lacks. He would go to the stake, or what is much harder for a politician, sink into obscurity, rather than surrender one of his principles. They are not Socialist principles. They are the hard-shell maxims of Victorian Liberalism. They seem in our situation to be sterile: they could not carry us through another year of this depression. Mr. Snowden is gambling—not overconfidently—on its mending. But if it does not mend?

If it does not mend, how then does he envisage his problem? He pins his hopes on "economy." That word ran like a *leitmotif* through his speech. It is in our situation a battle cry. It divides temperaments and classes even more than it divides parties. It has governed us for two years, under this tight-lipped little man who revels in saying No, and he proposes to rely on it even more confidently in the future. It has meant, so far, the monotonous rejection of all save the smaller routine schemes for absorbing the unemployed into productive work. It has vetoed every plan of national reconstruction and reëquipment. It has delayed by three years the extension of the term of compulsory schooling. It has caused the rejection or postponement of engineering projects, big and little, from the Channel Tunnel to Charing Cross Bridge. It had led, under a Labor government, to a general reduction of wages in the Post Office. It is only to the fighting services that it seems to have no application. They will absorb $557,000,000 in a total budget of $4,450,000,000. There is here, to be sure, a nominal reduction of $2,450,000, but when one reflects on the colossal drop in the prices of everything, from steel to wheat, which armies and navies buy, this reduction looks like a real increase. Any further "economy" must fall, as Mr. Snowden himself foreshadowed, if not on education and the social services (housing having suffered already), then on the relief of unemployment. It is a tame and tightly disciplined party which sits, uneasily conscious of the clash of temperaments, behind Mr. Snowden. That it will tolerate much more of this type of economy, I rather doubt. The only way in which it would gladly welcome economy in the "dole," would be through the planned creative provision of employment, and that Mr. Snowden opposes.

The popular alternative is available. A general tariff, which prudes would describe as a mere expedient for revenue, would draw a great majority of adherents from every party, and would even rally some Liberals. It would revive the vanished popularity of the Labor government, and might assure to it a new lease of power, for the average voter does not love negation, though it may freeze him into an attitude of respect. It is an open secret that the Cabinet, or part of it, has been studying this proposal as Mr. Keynes has elaborated it, and has not, I believe, rejected it. I will not obtrude my own reasons for preferring other methods of controlling imports—enough that this plan would provide revenue without further adding to the income tax, that it would raise prices and profits, and in certain trades increase employment, at the risk of some further decline in the export trades. The probabilities are, however, that Mr. MacDonald will evade decision. He is not, like his Chancellor, a Victorian doctrinaire, but caution in his case makes for inertia. The party, moreover, has come to rely on the Liberal vote in the House, though that support may fail it when at last it faces an election. But unless it breaks with Mr. Snowden and itself adopts a tariff, a victory for the Conservatives and a frank policy of protection are certain.

There is, I think, another way out, but since my own views about it are eccentric, I will mention it but briefly. Through the years of deflation, since 1921, one class in the community has manifestly gained at the expense of the rest. Every fall in prices, every appreciation of the pound, favors the lender, and brings about a redistribution of the national income. The rentier, the holder of fixed-interest-bearing securities, continues to draw the same absolute amount from the smaller total, and what he draws has a higher purchasing power. The variable part of the income shrinks, and there ensues a struggle over profits, wages and social services. The extent of the gains which this class has made in a decade can be measured in statistics, but it staggers the imagination. The effrontery of these gains is especially evident when one reflects that every pound which a man subscribed to the war debt had on the average appreciated, as far back as 1925, by over a quarter of its value. The French divided their debt by five: we added over 25 percent to ours by mere monetary manipulation. The same thing is true of every debenture stock. Nor does the process stop. The recent world crisis shuffled the proportions again, raised the rentier's tribute once more and left less of the nation's income to be divided among despondent employers and alarmed workers. It is pathetic to think that all the while that Mr. Snowden is performing his prodigies of fiscal virtue to reduce the nominal amount of the debt, its real value is steadily rising. It is doubtless too late to scale down the debt, and other capital claims, in inverse proportion to the increase in the value of gold. We perform that operation on postmen's wages, but not on the rentier's tribute. But is there any reason why taxation should hesitate to track down these elusive gains? If it would be unwise to tax profits or salaries further, does anything forbid us to dip

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deeper into these incomes which even the British Treasury classifies as "unearned"? One asks the question, but one knows the answer. This swing of wealth to the rentier has meant also a shift in the balance of political power. Even under a Labor government the banks are the final arbiters of our economic destiny.

About Mr. Snowden's little essay in Victorian radicalism—a rather modest tax on land values—I need say nothing. It would have gladdened the generation to which mentally he belongs. It will never be imposed. Long before the necessary valuation is completed, a protectionist triumph will have swept away him and his tax and the last vestige of Victorian England.

London. H. N. BRAILSFORD.

Recent Trends in Biology

DURING the present century, there have been a number of important developments in biology: the disciplines of heredity, of development and of ecology, to mention only three, have grown from very modest beginnings into true subsciences. But the various subsciences have interlocked, and perhaps the most important single result of the last thirty years' work has been to unify the whole science of biology, which, at the beginning of the century, was sadly disunited.

Thirty years ago, evolution had become more or less of an armchair subject, against whose academic sterilities many of the most original minds in biology were in rebellion. There was as yet no plausible theory of heredity. What is now the science of animal behavior had just emerged from the anecdotal stage. Comparative anatomy had become a formidable but isolated discipline, which not infrequently (I am quoting from Radl's "History of Biological Theory") was so busy comparing one thing with another that it sometimes forgot to ask what either of them really was. Sex determination was still a mystery. The idea of hormones had not been properly formulated by the physiologists, and had not penetrated at all to general biology. The physiology of development was in its infancy; so was the science of comparative physiology. The study of function, when it was not anthropocentric and medical, was (if I may coin a word) batrachocentric, for it dealt almost wholly with frogs; and there was little interpenetration between departments of physiology and zoölogy. Cytology, the study of cells and their miniature organs such as chromosomes, was well developed, but had made few contacts with other branches of biology. And systematics was quite content to go on piling up new species (or at least new specific names) and to fill in minor details as to geographical distribution.

Today, biology is a unified science. It is still, of course, full of gaps, obviously incomplete on every hand; but its different branches have sprouted and become organically united. It is now possible to teach biology as a connected whole; some universities have even begun to do so.

The transformation has not been due to any one factor. The rediscovery of Mendel's work in 1900 was the first vital stimulus, for through it, not only was a new subscience of heredity created, but at a bound the microscopical study of cells came to be linked with the study of experimental matings in the breeding-pen; the chromosomes turned out to be the microscopic agents of Mendel's laws. But expansion in many directions was necessary before interconnection could be effected; and the best I can do is not to attempt a historical survey, but to try to explain something of the present structure of this new unified biology.

First come the effects of the new subscience of heredity. The marriage of genetics with evolution was a union destined to be fertile indeed. The happy ending is interesting, for in the beginning the discoveries of Mendelism seemed only to accentuate existing cleavages. Good Darwinians denied that the characters with which Mendelians dealt had anything to do with evolution; good Mendelians scoffed at the efficacy of natural selection. Since those early days, however, much water has flowed under our bridges. In the first place, Mendelism has been generalized. All its laws spring from two facts: that the physical basis of heredity consists of self-reproducing material units (the so-called *genes*), and that these units are strung together in groups within the visible bodies known as chromosomes. Second, the behavior of genes appears to account for the hereditary transmission of all save a few minor characters. Third, the genes, though normally stable, are found occasionally to alter *(mutate)* into a new and equally stable phase; and mutation has now been artificially produced on a large scale by means of X-rays. Fourth, whereas at first only "large" mutations, producing striking effects, were known, intensive study has revealed that "small" mutations are more numerous, and also more important as raw material for evolution, since they may be beneficial to their possessors, while large ones are usually upsetting in their effects. And fifth, mathematical methods have been applied to the problem.

The net result is that selection and mutation are now reconciled, and we can all be Darwinians again, though we must wear our Darwinism with a difference. Small mutations turn out to be the raw material without which evolutionary change would

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not be possible; but selection is the main agent which directs and guides that change. The extent of our progress may be gauged by Dr. R. A. Fisher's new and very important book, "The Genetical Basis of Natural Selection." In his first chapter he points out that the old Darwinians wanted to reject the ideas of Mendelism as inconsistent with their scheme; but he proceeds to demonstrate the startling fact that without the Mendelian postulates of independent and relatively stable hereditary units, natural selection could never get a grip on the constitution of the species, and, to be brief, would not work!

The corollary of the idea that small mutations are the chief raw material for evolution is that evolution must usually be a gradual process. This has been put beyond reasonable doubt, as a fact in its own right, by the recent work both of paleontologists and of systematists. The describers of fossils have now given us a series of extinct forms which would have brought tears of joy to Darwin's eyes, series in which gradual change in definite directions is always to be seen. Such series have been unearthed (in the literal sense of the word) among horses, sea-urchins, camels, snails, titanotheres, starfish, saber-tooths, ammonites, elephants and other creatures.

The systematists meanwhile have devoted a great deal of attention to studying minor variations within the species, and other aspects of the species problem. As result, we now can point to local varieties which differ from the neighboring type in all degrees, from scarcely perceptible nuances up to distinctions obviously of specific rank. Isolation, we can say with assurance, undoubtedly tends to lead to divergence, and the divergence is generally a gradual one. So that the observational testimony of these subsciences is at one with the experimental and analytic studies of genetics; they can all be reconciled in the fundamentally Darwinian idea of gradual change, due to the accumulation of small Mendelian mutations under the influence of natural selection.

The other main field in which fertile unification has taken place is that of development, though here the process has not yet gone quite so far.

A great difficulty for many people has been this: If heredity, and so in the long run evolution, be based upon the collection of independent units which Mendelism reveals, how are we to account for the coördination so manifest in the organism at any and every stage, the correlated changes seen alike in individual development and racial evolution? How, in fact, get an organic whole out of a mosaic, a unity out of a collection of units?

The first and most general answer is that the problem is not one for biology alone; the question asks itself in every field. How do the revolving electrons give us specifically different atoms according simply to their number and arrangement? How out of separate unit-atoms do we get unitary substances with their own properties, as water in place of bits of oxygen and hydrogen? How, out of separate individuals, do we achieve a society? Throughout Nature the unity of wholes is, somehow or other, achieved out of the separateness of unit parts, and I for one do not feel that any metaphysical quality of Emergence is needed to account for the fact: but in each case the methods for achieving the coördinated whole are different.

In our biological wholes, the chief methods are the following: There is first the long known method of nervous coördination; this, however, is the last to come into play during development. Second, there is the effect of function, of use and disuse. It is well known that many tissues, like muscle, grow stronger with use; and it has recently been established beyond doubt that not only the quantity but also the direction of tendon-fibers and bone-struts is determined by the stresses and strains to which they are subjected. Thus, all the minutiæ of adjustment of bones, tendons, muscles and other organs to their job within the body do not have to be fixed by heredity at all, but are dealt with *ad hoc* in each individual as it grows up. Old problems, such as the impossibility of imagining how all the muscles, bones, sinews and blood vessels needed to support a large-horned deer's head develop coördinately, turn out to be no problems at all. Or at least, they are not evolutionary problems, but problems of development; and the number of separate difficulties is much reduced.

Then there is the method of coördination by hormones, or chemical messengers discharged into the blood. By this means, not only can widely distant parts of the body be affected by a single agency, but they can all be affected simultaneously, which is of the utmost importance for orderly development; a good example is seen in the metamorphosis of tadpole into frog, which happens automatically when the amount of thyroid-gland hormone in the blood reaches a certain level.

But this method can only work when the blood stream is already there; for earlier stages we used something else. And here various converging lines of research are introducing us to the notion of what for lack of further knowledge we call a morphogenetic or form-producing field. *How* it determines form is yet unknown; the important fact for our present purpose is that it does so and that it is a *field*—in other words an organization in which the forces at work are interconnected and have a definite configuration as a unitary whole. When you put a magnet under a piece of paper on which are strewn iron filings, you expose them to its magnetic field: as you move the magnet about, the form of the field remains the same, but different filings now constitute that form. A bar-magnet has a field with two poles; cut it in two, and each of the bits still has a field of the same general form.

So with early development and with regeneration.

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It takes place within the framework of a field of sorts. As with the bar-magnet, this kind of field can sometimes be subdivided: cut a sea-urchin's egg in two, and each half still has a field of the same general type as the whole. I will give two other examples. Spemann has found that the most rapidly growing region of the developing newt's egg has the capacity, if grafted into the flank or belly of another developing egg, of inducing there a second set of organs, a supernumerary embryo. Like a magnet, but in some as yet not understood way, it induces a form-producing field in the more or less indifferent materials of the egg, and forces them to grow as it dictates. The persistence of this field throughout life has been demonstrated in adult newts: if you cut off the tail of a newt, wait till the first sign of a regeneration bud occurs, and then cut off a leg and graft the tail-bud on to the leg-stump, the material, though produced by the tail, is still indifferent, and is transformed by its new position in the form-field, so that it grows into leg!

Thus, the mosaic of the hereditary units is forced to operate within the framework of a unitary field; they can only come into play in accordance with its organization, and it has the quality of wholeness from the start.

Finally, evidence is accumulating on all hands to show that many, perhaps most, Mendelian units work by controlling the *rate* of some process in the developing egg or embryo. This conception is likely to prove as fruitful as have corresponding conceptions in physical chemistry; but it would take too long to go into detail of how and why.

The upshot is that, although in detail the relation of hereditary unit to finished character, of chromosome-outfit to adult organism, remains one of the most difficult and unexplored regions of biology, yet the country has become opened up so that we are beginning to see its broad lines. The randomly assorted medicine-cupboard of genes is entrapped from the start in an environment of order. They must act upon processes marching along in a given direction; they must operate within an organized field; and, later, must express themselves through the coördinating agencies of function, blood and nerves. Heredity has been the great unifier of biological theory during the past twenty years; the emphasis is now passing to Development.

JULIAN HUXLEY.

Progress and Poverty

THERE is no question that the Empire State Building is New York's handsomest skyscraper. The first five stories, with their gray façade, silver-framed windows and long rainlike lines in the stone, rise graceful and sheer from the street: one feels a sudden relief as one passes them—they do not crowd and overpower Fifth Avenue as most of the newer Fifth Avenue buildings do. And the successive tiers fall back, each just in time not to make too heavy and dull a wall—till the main towering plinth is reached. Close to, the long lines of the nickel facings have the look of a silver inlay and the whole long pale and silver strip might be an inlay on the pale even blue of the sky. This towering plinth, though it is the tallest in the city, has almost always an effect of lightness. From far off the gray observation tower looks as light as if it were made of shadows, its silver cap as it catches the sun, as bright and brittle as a Christmas-tree globe. In a warm afternoon sun the building is bisque-pink, with delicate nickel lines: a rainy day makes a pleasant harmony with bright pale facings on dull pale gray; on a chilly late afternoon, the mast is like a bright piece of silverware, an old salt-cellar elegantly chased. And though in a rawer light the building looks less fine, it may still seem as insubstantial as a packet of straw-colored Nabiscos stuck together and stood on end. In the cold dazing light of a winter morning, a bluish-gray block with gleaming silvery edges against a grayish-blue sky, it seems semi-translucent like a cake of ice. Only rarely in glaring midday does it look metallic, functional and hard like a machine-part.

The Empire State Building is the tallest building in the world: it is 1,250 feet high.[1] There is a telescope in Madison Square Park for people to look at the tower through, just as they used to look at the moon. There are 86 stories, not counting the mast; 6,400 windows; and 67 elevators. The building contains 10,000,000 bricks and weighs 600,000,000 pounds—distributed, however, so evenly that "the weight on any given square inch is no greater than that normally borne by a French heel." The plot on which it stands is only about 200 by 425 feet, but the building contains 37,000,000 cubic feet. It is calculated that, if it were full, there would be 25,000 people working there and 40,000 more people going in and out every day. In the immediate future, however, there will not be by any means that many, because business is extremely bad and even the office buildings already erected are full of untenanted space. Of the offices in the Empire State Building only a quarter have so far been rented, and in moving into it, most of the

[1] The complete facts about the Empire State Building, as well as a series of drawings of it in course of construction, may be found in "Empire State: A Pictorial Record of Its Construction," by Col. W. A. Starrett and Vernon Howe Bailey. New York: William Edwin Rudge. $15.

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tenants will merely be leaving further vacancies elsewhere. The Empire State Building was put up at top speed in less than a year: in one case, telephoto had to be employed to get the right materials rushed from Cleveland. And now here it is planted in the business district where nobody needs it at all and where it is sure to make a good deal worse one of the worst traffic-jams in town.

The people responsible for the Empire State building, who contributed more than half the $52,000,000 required for it, are John J. Raskob of the Democratic National Committee, Pierre du Pont of the Du Pont Powder Company, and the presidents of the Nipissing Mines Company and the Chatham Phenix National Bank and Trust Company. Al Smith is the president of the owning company and is said to get $50,000 a year. Today, the first of May, the day of the formal opening, he looks very compact, decent and well satisfied, in his dark coat and black derby, with his official family around him. It is his two little grandchildren who perform the ceremony of opening the building by cutting a ribbon across the Fifth Avenue entrance. Then the lights are switched on by an electric button pressed by President Hoover in Washington. Then there are speeches on the eighty-sixth floor. Al Smith reads a telegram from President Hoover, which congratulates "everyone who had any part in its conception and construction" on "one of the outstanding glories of a great city." Governor Roosevelt congratulates them on their "grasp of the needs of the future"—he asserts that the Empire State Building "is needed not only by the city, it is needed by the whole nation." There are two keynotes today, he says: one is the keynote of vision, the other is the keynote of faith. Mayor Walker, whose administration is under calamitous inquiry and whose impeachment has recently been demanded, congratulates them on having provided "a place higher, further removed than any in the world, where some public official might like to come and hide." Then the R.K.O. "Theatre of the Air" broadcasts a radio program.

The entrance hall of the Empire State Building is four stories high and made of gray German marble with an effect of crushed strawberries rubbed into it. On the far illuminated cream of the long ceiling are gold and silver circles, stars and suns, conventionalized geometrical patterns supposed to be derived from snowflake crystals. At the end of the hallway is an enormous flat steely sun blazing on the flat steely Empire State Building with a bombardment of rays like railroad tracks. The elevator doors are black with silver lines and have a suggestion of Egyptian tombs. There are a great many uniformed guards, with guns in holsters, posted around.

The fifty-fifth floor is the show floor. Green marble and green doors: a great empty loft with bright white walls with black ends of wire sticking out of them and crumbs of plaster on the floor. Through the unwashed windows streaked with dirt the windowed square-walled wilderness of buildings has the same dreary yellow as the streaks. If one looks out of an open window, one can see the water-tanks on top of other buildings, somebody's expensive penthouse done in green and very luxurious with steamer-chairs, an ad which says "Buy Your Furs from Fox" printed in big letters on the roof of a building and aimed at the occupants of the Empire State, and an American flag. Below that, if one leans out, one sees the streets with the pedestrians and the motor cars very small moving straight and slow along them. To the west, the steamboats and barges moving slowly along the Hudson; to the south, the narrowing wedge of the island studded and pronged at the lower end with its own planting of enormous buildings; to the east, the iron blue-gray East River, strung across with black skeleton bridges, a gray airplane above it; to the north, the dwindled Chrysler tower, a tinny scaled armadillo-tail ending in a stiff stinglike drill, the white vertically-grooved flat-headed Daily News Building, the chocolate and gilded Luna Park summits of the American Radiator Company Building, like a large "castle" out of a goldfish bowl. Here the light of the setting sun strikes that crowded mass of upright rectangles and blunt truncated towers, bringing out in the raw stone and drab brick their yellows without delicacy or brightness, their browns without richness or warmth. Brooklyn, Long Island City, Bronx, Englewood, Hoboken, Jersey City: straight streets, square walls, crowded bulks, regular rectangular windows—more than ten million people sucked into that vast ever-expanding barracks, with scarcely a garden, scarcely a park, scarcely an open square, whose distances in all directions are blotted out in a pale slate-gray. And here is the pile of stone, brick, nickel and steel, the shell of offices, shafts, windows and steps, that outmultiplies and outstacks them all—that, more purposeless and superfluous than any, is being advertized as a triumph in the hour when the planless competitive society, the dehumanized urban community, of which it represents the culmination, is bankrupt.

This big loft is absolutely empty, there is nothing to look at in it—or rather there is only one thing: a crude but genial mural drawn in pencil by, presumably, one of the plasterers or electricians, which, all unknown to the management, confronts every visitor to the fifty-fifth floor. A large male figure is seen standing upright and fornicating, *Venus aversa,* with a stooping female figure, who has no arms but pendulous breasts. The man is saying, "O, man!" Further along is a gigantic vagina with its name in four large letters written under it.

One is grateful to the man who drew these pictures: he is a public benefactor. He has done something to take the curse off the opening of the Empire State Building.

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II

John Dravic came to Buchanan[2] six years ago and got a job in the Semlin car-shop. Before that he had been in Pennsylvania. He was born in Jugoslavia and his wife was an Austrian. He was forty and she was thirty. They had two sons, five and six, and two years after they came to Buchanan they had another son.

John Dravic bought a little house in Buchanan on Broda Avenue. There is more variety and more space in Broda Avenue than in most places in mill communities. The mill itself is a big low brick building with a notched roof and it has a picket-fence around it, guarded by a man with a gun in a holster; but outside there are little gardens with—just now, the first days of May—some white flowers as well as green vegetables; a corner saloon with billiard tables and Polish newspapers; an Italian store with vases of gay yellow, white and pink paper flowers in the windows and another with a stuffed eagle spreading its wings; a little back-yard apple orchard with apple trees all in white bloom and with their trunks whitewashed up to the branches; and a little slimy and greenish but running stream with the rusty foot of an iron bedstead sticking out of it and a baby-carriage tire lying on the bottom. Across the street from John Dravic's house are several tiny bright-red brick mansions with little stone terraces built up from the street and thick clumps of creeping pinks, their pink livid beside the brick, oozing over the terraces toward the street. At the foot of the street is the Payson River, fresh and gleaming below its falls, flowing nervously and swiftly past the new greenery of its locust-grown bank. But beyond the river is a waste-darkened canal between a textile mill and a paper mill. The road that goes over the Payson has on one side a splendid green-and-orange Tom Thumb golf-course, with special little heart-shaped chairs, and on the other side a grisly dump for old scrapped car-bodies. And the whole landscape, even in May, coming to life as it is with spring, seems irremediably infected with the disease that blights industrial settlements—so that what ought to be fields and country hillsides are everywhere wastes going bald of grass and the finest country weather is made gassy and tarnished with smoke.

John Dravic's house is not fancy, as some of the Buchanan houses are—it is a plain two-story affair, dark-green, with a white double porch for both stories. He always let out the bottom floor and lived above: there are four very small rooms and a kitchen and a bath on each. About a year ago an Italian woman with her family rented the bottom floor. She was a big, tall, strong woman from Bologna with gray hair and gray eyes. Her first husband had died of t. b. and she had three tubercular children by him. Her second husband drank and left her. Both the girls had to be sent to the free tuberculosis hospital. The boy had earned a living in a butcher-shop, but when he came down with t. b., too, Mrs. Berelli had to go to work in the mill. And when the slump came she found herself earning only $15 or $20, working four days every other week. Finally she found herself laid off altogether. They didn't want anybody over forty, and if she went to the factory gate, they'd chase her away like a dog. They were putting in automatic looms which made it possible to produce more with fewer people. One person was supposed to be able to attend to six of the new looms, whereas each weaver had had only two of the old ones. She had to sell her insurance, and lost money on it, but even so she didn't have enough to live on and pay the rent. One of her girls, who had only had light symptoms, was being sent home from the hospital. Mrs. Berelli appealed to the city for relief, and the city agreed to pay her rent.

John Dravic was her landlord and he wouldn't have put her out, but he was out of work himself. After five years in the Semlin car-shop, he had been laid off last January and there was no hope of their taking anybody back. For a short time after that he had had a job minding the furnace in a New York theatre, but the play went off and the theatre closed, and since then he had had nothing. He walked all over New York and Payson and everywhere within walking distance (because his money was so low that he couldn't even afford carfare), but he couldn't find anything to do.

The Dravics were quiet people and kept very much to themselves. They didn't know anybody well, because they had only been in Buchanan six years, and in a community of mixed Germans, Poles, Hungarians, Italians and Jews it takes longer than that to make friends—that's one reason they don't get together to organize. But Mrs. Berelli liked them and they were nice to her. When Mrs. Berelli had just come back from the hospital after an operation, Mrs. Dravic, who was a delicate woman herself, had always come down every night after she had gotten into bed to see that she was all right. Every morning she would talk to Mr. Dravic when he started out to look for work. He had gotten very gloomy about it. He would say: "You're the only one workin' in the house and now you're not workin'!" She would try to cheer him up by saying: "Well, now that we're not workin', we might just as well not worry and go out in the backyard and take a sunbath!" That was what she used to do, though the truth was she didn't know which way to turn. But she always tried to keep the Dravics' spirits up, just as whenever she went to see her son in the hospital, she always said she was doing fine, so that he wouldn't worry about her.

Mr. Dravic, when he was home, used to work hard over a little vegetable garden and a little strip of lawn beside the house. He always kept himself busy. Another thing he used to do was teach his two older boys music. He loved music and had

[2] The names of the people and places are fictitious.

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two violins, a 'cello and a guitar. One of the boys learned the violin and the other the 'cello, and they would play trios almost every evening. Sometimes they would get other people in and have an amateur orchestra. John Dravic was extremely fond of his boys. Mrs. Berelli would see them all out walking together: Mr. Dravic was tall and the four-year-old baby was tiny. The oldest boy went to high school and was brilliant. He made little airplanes and boats and he wrote a piece in the high-school paper about how the government in Russia looked after the poor people whereas in America it didn't care. Mrs. Berelli herself couldn't understand how the rich people could do such a thing as to let the mill-workers starve. Buchanan, Payson and Semlin and all the other neighboring mill towns were full of families out of work. Mrs. Berelli didn't know why that President in that White House didn't do something about it.

At last, a few weeks ago, John Dravic decided to go into business. He bought a little corner store which sold soft drinks, cigars and candies, across the river in Payson. Somebody persuaded him it was a good investment and he borrowed $300 to buy it. But it turned out that it wasn't such a good investment, because there was a much bigger and better candy and cigar store only a few blocks away; and John Dravic had never had any experience at store-keeping: he had never done anything but work in car-shops. He began to get discouraged when he came to realize how meager his stock was, that he had no money to buy any more and that he was $300 in debt. After a week of spending every day sitting alone in the shop and waiting for customers that didn't come, he got so that he hated to get up in the morning and go there. He never did anything about the slovenly-looking signs which said "Soft Drinks" and "Cigars" scrawled up in watery white print on the insides of the windows and when the pile of Between the Acts boxes which was the sole window display toppled over, he didn't fix it up again.

Early in the morning of the first of May, sometime between one and two, Mrs. Berelli's daughter, who was home from the hospital now, came in and waked her up. She had just been waked up herself by an awful bang on the floor above. The next minute, Mrs. Dravic came running downstairs and said that her husband had shot himself. They rushed up and found John Dravic on the floor of the boy's bedroom: he was reaching with his hands and straining with the upper part of his body as if he were trying to get hold of something to get up by. Mrs. Dravic turned on the light and Mrs. Berelli saw that the bed was all soaking in blood.

All three of the boys were there, with blood like upset paint all over their faces. He had shot them all while they were asleep. A little while before, he had taken the baby out of his crib in the room where Mrs. Dravic slept. She had thought nothing of it at the time, because he did that every night to carry him to the bathroom before he went to bed. But tonight he had taken him in and put him into bed with the two boys.

They were all dead by six o'clock in the morning. Now poor Mrs. Dravic, who yesterday had a family that played trios in the evenings has nothing but four corpses for whom the cheap undertaker has done his best to patch up heads blown out with pointblank pistol shots. The only comfort is that the baby looks pretty good.

EDMUND WILSON.

Washington Notes

The Great Engineer Goes Practical—Senator Fess Remains—Greasing the Ways—The Democratic Candidate

SOME Republicans of more or less prominence in the party organization who have recently talked with the White House incumbent about the general political situation as it pertains to 1932, tell me that the "Chief" is assuming the same sort of personal direction of administration politics now that he did of his preconvention campaign for the nomination in 1928. In other words, his thoughts are centered not only upon the renomination, of which he is virtually assured, but upon how best to promote his chances of reëlection. There is of course nothing extraordinary in this. It is the normal reaction of a President in his first term, though it has begun sooner than usual.

In Mr. Hoover's case, however, the early White House concentration has two explanations. The first is that his present political status is lower than that of any other Republican President I can now recall, saving only the ill fated Taft. The Republican party, as a result of economic depression, for which Hoover was not responsible, and of his general ineptitude, for which he is, is pretty thoroughly sick and discouraged throughout the country. Its scheduled and inevitable standard bearer for the coming fight has been shorn of his prestige. The popularity with which he entered office has diminished almost to the vanishing point and his former running mate is significantly hesitant whether or not to take another chance with him. Considering these things—and some others—I think any unbiased person would freely admit that it is none too early for Mr. Hoover once more to direct his mighty engineering mind toward the problems of practical politics.

The other reason for political concentration is that right now, and for a good long time to come, there is not really very much else to do. Congress is not in session and the routine administration of the government is the only business on hand for the next eight months. There is, of course, a great deal for the President to worry about. Any executive who, after two years in the White House, finds himself face to face with a nine-hundred-million-dollar Treasury deficit and an almost certain increase in taxation, is certainly not going to be free from worry. But for a long time at least there is nothing he can do about it.

Moreover, when Congress meets again in December, Hoover's program will be negative, not affirmative. There is no legislation of an important nature which the President plans to urge. On the contrary, he will exert every effort

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to prevent the passage of congressional legislation designed to appropriate money and raise income rates at the coming session. Under the circumstances, it seems fairly clear that there is no reason why Mr. Hoover should not devote himself to practical political thought from now on, and there are a considerable number of weighty personal reasons why he should.

You see evidences of this in various forms. There is for example the recent word quietly circulated among the party wheel horses that Senator Fess and Mr. Lucas, the managerial pair about whom so much ink has been spilled, will continue to operate as chairman and executive chairman of the National Committee—at least until the convention meets. Beyond question this is Hoover's decision, and it is a distinct reversal of the plans proposed by various organization leaders who thought they were working in harmony with White House ideas and were "close in" to the titular leader there domiciled. Weeks ago these genial gentlemen agreed among themselves that it would be most inadvisable to go into the active campaign for renomination under Fess-Lucas committee generalship. It was conceded that the unpopularity and garrulousness of Fess, plus the frightful publicity breaks that invariably follow Mr. Lucas' performances, oratorical and otherwise, made them liabilities that should be liquidated as speedily as possible.

Various names were considered for Mr. Fess's successor —among them being those of Secretary of War Patrick Hurley, Dave Mulvane of Kansas, Bascom Slemp of Virginia and others. For a while it was felt the change was imminent and an announcement was looked for daily. Now, it seems there will be none. The "Chief" has put his mind on the problem and concluded that unless a change would be an undeniable improvement, it should not be made. Therefore, the word has gone down the line that Mr. Fess will remain, and the search for and consideration of names has ceased.

Another evidence of Hoover's political concentration is in the local appointments now being made in various states —district atorneys, federal judges, United States marshals, customs appraisers, etc. A large number of these have gone through the White House mill since March 4, and except in the case of Senator Schall of Minnesota, who is extremely anti-Hoover anyhow, they have been uniformly in accord with the wishes and recommendations of the Republican Senators or of the recognized party leaders in those states where both Senators are Democratic. In Pennsylvania, Ohio, New York, Indiana, Illinois, Connecticut, Massachusetts and New Jersey, the patronage is now being distributed altogether upon a machine basis.

But what interests me more than Hoover's appointments, now being made to please and placate delegate-controlling state leaders, and his direction of the national-committee activities, is the report of his feeling about the Democratic situation. I am told that he asks practically everyone with whom he talks politics at all, whom they think the Democrats will nominate and what the Democratic platform will do on prohibition. In public and during his press conferences he acts as if he had never heard of the Democratic party or of prohibition. He never remotely refers to them when more than one person at a time can hear him, but to individual callers and friends he invariably brings up both subjects. I have questioned a good many with whom he has talked, and if they accurately reflect his feelings, Hoover regards the Raskob drive for a Wet plank and the reported lack of favor with which Smith and Raskob look upon Roosevelt's candidacy as calculated to brighten Republican prospects.

His attitude is reflected in the White House entourage and among the more responsible administration politicians. I think there is no doubt at all that they would very much prefer to see either Smith or Young nominated on a repeal plank than Roosevelt on a platform which, like that of 1928, takes no position on the Eighteenth Amendment. In other words, Mr. Hoover and those most actively interested in promoting his political fortunes, in which the fate of the Republican party in 1932 is involved, regard Governor Roosevelt as the strongest candidate the other side could put up against him.

This opinion is not, however, shared by a certain hard-boiled and exceedingly practical group of Old Guardsmen who are much more concerned about the fate of the Republican party than the fate of Herbert Hoover. This element is for Hoover's renomination because, as Republicans, there is nothing else they can do, but they do not care for him in the least and heartily wish there were some way of sidetracking him. To them Owen D. Young seems infinitely the strongest candidate the Democrats can put in the field next time. The reason is that they think, as they always have thought and always will, exclusively in terms of campaign funds and big-business support. Young's candidacy would, in their judgment, ensure the Democrats an overflowing treasury, make it difficult for the Republicans to collect money and take from the Republican ticket that industrial and financial support which has so often pulled it through. My personal view is that Mr. Young as the Democratic nominee might very easily be more formidable to Hoover than any other, were it not for the obvious fact that there is no way to nominate him except by pushing aside in the convention the one logical nominee for whom there is the strongest popular sentiment. This could only be done I think, by the strong-arm method and in full sight of the audience. That makes it dangerous—almost too dangerous to try.

Washington. T. R. B.

Tragic Mask at Capua

I HAVE been walking for some time, with the afternoon lengthening the shadows around me, in the great amphitheatre at Capua. This is the town of the ancients' delights, the marble halls of our English songs, the city where Hannibal's invincible army, wintering the hard weather through, was conquered by pleasure and beauty, all the African sinews withered and relaxed. The amphitheatre lies at the edge of the city now, surrounded with green fields, sunk below the level of the present surface. Sometimes the bases and drums of columns are scattered on the grass and under twisting vine leaves; and, laid along the walls of the arena, there are torsos and heads, legs, arms, symbols, insignia and ornament. But the sweep of the ancient ring is there still, the arches and the walls

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stand strong and rough, however stripped of their magnificent marbles, which have gone to adorn the later palaces of Capua, and however bare of the stucco which time and weather have scaled away. It is a fine place still. Its romance lies in its memories and ruin, but its character lies in its solid construction and design. The light falling between the columns comes slantingly down toward the last tiers of the ancient seats, and strikes on a solitary figure standing there.

I have for some time been noticing this man, the only other human being with me in this lonely splendor. It is nearing five o'clock and the gatekeeper will wake from the siesta he is taking by his little table under a fig tree, and will come to say that it is closing time. At first I took the stranger for some chance tourist like myself, one of the few that are likely to be here in Capua looking at this Roman monument. But gradually I have noticed, as I walked about, seeing him from first here and then there, that he does not move from his position and that he has about him some line, some style, posture or whatever it may be, that seems professional; as if, that is, position, line, aspect, were in the nature of his business and calling in life. He, too, is looking at me, it seems. And so with that I draw near and begin one of those conversations in which tourists are apt to be so free.

Presently we know each other very well, or at least I know that he has been an actor and that he lives in Capua, retired, I gather, because of the decline in his art throughout the world and the general *decadenza* of the theatre in Italy. It is ten years since he was busy with *tournées* and dramatic companies. During that time, these ten dark years, he has lived in Capua, with his old mother, who is past eighty but goes to mass every morning and has a little garden where she sits. Even at that, life in Capua, he says, costs quite enough, I may be sure.

While we talk, the circle of the arena fills with shadows, like a dusky pool all blue, and out on one side the field has the long shade of the walls, broken with arches of light. With closing time we must take ourselves away. The custodian has come from under his fig tree and seems suddenly interested about his duties. I propose that, since it is an hour or so before my train for Rome, he give me the pleasure of coming with me to the café, where we may go on with the conversation. He makes a gesture of hesitation, the invitation already accepted. From this on, the occasion is his. His is the responsibility of making my hour possible and charming. It is a situation of sensitive concern about my pleasure (of sensitive feeling, that is) and of exhibitionism. In sum, he takes the stage.

The temperament of the actor is, apparently, an eternal element, an absolute, as it were, in the cosmos of human nature. I listen to this man, well on toward sixty, telling me of his life, of his days in the theatre, his adventures on tour, his visits to diverse countries, before audiences of various races. He has been in Rumania, in Mexico, in Buenos Aires, Paris, even in Havana, where the upper galleries were full of great blacks who hung over the railing as if they were going to drop on to the stage—rows of bull chests, great whites of eyes, shining white teeth—and where he saw one day a performance of Othello by a black actor, who roared and raged in the jungle style entirely, all savagery, until he came to the murder of Desdemona, at which he fell into the style of Novelli, whose performance of the scene he imitated exactly, to the astonishment of Novelli himself, in whose touring company my friend was at the time. The temperament, as I said, must be eternal; for, as one may hear in most of the conversation of actors and may read in their memoirs, there is little of wonder or strangeness or record or fact that is anything beyond the speaker's self. One hears little high-colored anecdotes and incidents, with so little reflection or analysis as to be almost incredible, a canvas of not unpleasant egotism on which all that is drawn points toward that central figure in the composition, which is the narrator, quite naturally. And this very quality is a part, perhaps of the actor's charm, and undoubtedly a part of his talent, if he has any.

How much talent my companion has I cannot know, of course, though he has the gift, certainly, of social exchange and words and a centripetal memory for incidents that cannot be denied. I do notice that various passers-by, citizens of the town, I fancy, cast glances toward us as we sit talking at our little table, as if they have known this sight before. At any rate, we sit there at our table in the *piazza,* with the church and the palaces fronting us, their surfaces dotted with Roman stones, their eaves built of Roman cornices sometimes, and here and there from the walls a Roman head sticking out, taken from the ornamentation of the amphitheatre and much too large for their present uses. He tells me incident after incident. Once in Lisbon the manager of the opera broke the rule that no new singer was to be given a debut on the stage of that house, and after the first act the gentlemen took the ladies home and came back and threw the seats of the chairs on to the stage. He was present, and says that the pile of velvet seats reached to the top of the stage. Another time, he says, when his company was presenting "Romeo and Juliet" (what a play! he kisses his hand to the memory of it), some invidious enemy of the leading lady set out under Juliet's bed, in that divine scene where she pleads, oh, go not, love, it is not yet day, a certain vessel—a *vaso* he calls it—usually presented in small tables by the bed, in the full glare of the footlights—what laughter and howls there were from the audience, and during the whole scene!

On another occasion there was an amateur that he induced his chief, the great Novelli, it seems, to give a chance to in an evening's performance. One speech there was, the only one that the actor would have to execute. He was to say, "The evening of the twenty-fifth of August, 1777, in the Place de Grève fell a head; and that head was that of your father!" The amateur not only relapsed suddenly into a terrible Genoese dialect but said, "The evening of the twenty-fifth of August, in the Place de Grève, fell a head. And that head . . . was mine!" A roar from the audience. The actor said, "No, it was thine!" A tumult thereupon, and he shouted, "It was your father's."

Life is a strange thing. I seem to recognize this incident, not very definitely, however. But when my friend goes on with half a dozen other incidents with which Novelli is connected, I see what it is. He has read a delightful volume which came my way some months ago and which in the diversity and involution of traveling I had for the moment half forgotten: Franco Liberati's charming "Venti Anni di Vita di Palcoscenico"—"Twenty Years of Stage Life." My companion, then, does not even find it necessary that the incidents be his own or out of his own

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past, provided he is the moment's protagonist. So that is it; we have the same old business, stealing the spotlight.

There is one incident, however, that I like quite as much when he is telling it as I did when I read Signor Liberati's pages. It deals with Novelli's visit to Turkey, and I sit listening to it over again, as if I had never read it at all. This was in 1905, when Novelli played in Constantinople and was commanded to the sultan's private theatre in the palace, a theatre where all the ground floor was empty and you played to a golden balcony grille behind which you knew the sultan sat and from which came the murmur and chatter of his odalisques. There were restrictions. You could not, for example, play "Othello" because he was a Turk; nor "Camille" because she was not an honest woman; "William Tell" was revolutionary; in "Faust" the devil spoke. No weapons were allowed, even those of papier maché, which complicated Iago's share in wounding Othello, and made Nero's suicide most difficult. You could not mention the moon; you must delete the word *divan* and the word *favorite*. At one Shylock performance Abdul sent word that he did not care to see the other actors; the second act of "The Merchant of Venice," therefore, in which Novelli's Shylock did not appear, was omitted. And the sultan wished to see Novelli always in the center of the stage, no matter what the action might be. In that performance Novelli was most magnificent in the scene with the invective against the Christians (what these Christians be! et cetera).

Over this same stage had passed Bernhardt, Salvini, Rossi, Coquelin and many others.

The compensation was indeed regal. The sovereign sent a bag of Turkish gold. And all the actors, men and women, were nominated Knights of Public Instruction. Among them were included also Novelli's cook and an assistant mechanic who could not read.

At the end of this story my companion has risen; the evening shadows are lengthening in the square, he says, drawing down his cuffs and shaking hands with me; and we part like two shepherds in an eclogue.

STARK YOUNG.

Some Radio Entertainers

I MUST rule myself out of court at once as a competent listener to the radio, because of my incapacity to follow the "two remarkable young geniuses," as Brisbane calls them, Amos and Andy. I have no difficulty in discovering the source of their popularity; they are combining in a new medium two familiar forms of entertainment—the story comic strip and the black-face comedians out of the minstrel show. It seems to me that neither of these is peculiarly suitable to the radio, and I am convinced that the best form of radio entertainment will be one which rises out of the medium itself. When the process of television is perfected—it is promised in two to seven years—the spoken sketch will give way to something which adds visual entertainment.

The most successful type of program I have heard recently is a combination of the short speech and musical events. The Chase and Sanborn (coffee) program, a few weeks before Dr. George Dorsey died, had him, for five minutes or so, speaking on the persistence of ancient superstitions, but this was somewhat spoiled by too much emphasis on the single superstition that coffee keeps people awake. This was followed by Maurice Chevalier, whose bright and charming introductions are as entertaining as his songs; and occasional music completed the program. Another familiar composite hour is the General Electric, which has the "Adventures in Science," by Floyd Gibbons, specifically associated with the achievements of the General Electric, but rendered without excessive plugging and with some communication of the excitement of the research laboratories. The other part of this program is the orchestra directed by Walter Damrosch, with explanatory notes and little chats by the director. Instead of comment on the music, I quote complete one program:

Scherzo, from Symphony No. 5 in B Flat	Glazounov
"Symphonic Poem—Battle of the Huns"	Liszt
Allegretto, from Symphony No. 3 in F	Brahms
(a) "Spinning Song"	Mendelssohn
(b) "Spring Song"	Mendelssohn
Overture, "Oberon"	Weber

Mr. Alexander Woollcott has recently completed his first series of broadcasts as the Early Bookworm, a series sponsored, it is understood, by a group of publishers. In his final speech, Mr. Woollcott said that he had reviewed perhaps two hundred books and recommended perhaps twelve, so that the commercializing of his talents need not be taken too seriously. What might be taken seriously is Mr. Woollcott's way of "talking down." Although as one listened one felt that he had written out his speeches, they had none of the virtues of his written work, and, it seemed, all of his vices in excess. Sundry treasures "caught these old eyes," and most of the rest of Mr. Woollcott's anatomy grew old as he spoke. Referring to "The Outline of Science," he said it was written by H. G. Wells, "him and who else?—him and two other fellows." And he spent a good portion of a quarter of an hour quoting from a trivial book of schoolboy howlers with the relish of an English squire who detests intelligence, chortling, "awfully sound, awfully sound," over the definition of a demigod as a vessel containing beer and other liquids, and making jocose references to "old Dr. Freud." It is never difficult for me to quarrel with Mr. Woollcott's judgment, but in his published pieces he is not quite like this. And when one recalls that this series was supposed to be as intelligent and as intellectual as anything on the air, the consequences are a little disturbing.

Apart from the occasional appearance of a fine artist like Heifetz, or the broadcasting of a new opera with Mary Garden, or the reception of events not specifically prepared for the radio, my greatest entertainment is due to Mr. Raymond Knight, who broadcasts at ten o'clock on Saturday evenings from WJZ, without any perceptible commercial backing. Mr. Knight provides a complete burlesque of radio broadcasting, a sort of Jimmy Durante and Joe Cook event of the air. He insists he is broadcasting from station KUKU to the "great unresponsive radio audience (the voice of the diaphragm enunciating)," and his orchestra of fifty-four-and-a-half pieces, each man a musician and each musician a man, has learned to play by correspondence, so that the burlesque music occasionally

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breaks off waiting for a special-delivery letter to bring in the end of the composition. The musical director's commentary is an entertaining parody of other directors, and the historical notes inform us that Mendelssohn's "Spring Song," for example, was recently discovered in manuscript form by a stray dachshund which brought it to the professor, and the latter, recognizing its true value, sold it for waste-paper. With his helpers, Mr. Knight also conducts a Personal Service for Perturbed People, a Poetry Hour, and Uncle Ambrose's Hour of Detachment with the Kiddies, not to mention a Missing Persons' Bureau and a brief News Summary—all of it completely cockeyed—and one of those uplifting domestic hours in which the cooing sentimentality of the morning periods of the radio is beautifully taken off.

Chevalier, whom I mentioned before, is now audible on various programs and is a beautiful example of the persistence of character in a difficult medium. His French accent has been turned into an asset and the long analyses he makes of the French songs he is going to sing are full of charm and wit. It is a pity that, as in his concerts, he has to sing trivial and tedious songs chiefly out of his moving-picture repertory; but the richness of his personality comes over completely. Of all the people I have heard on the radio he is most easy to visualize; there must be a dozen others whom I have seen oftener than I have seen him and who become disembodied voices.

The radio as entertainment is still wavering between its own creations and the people whom it imports from other forms—which is exactly the position of the movies at its critical moments in the past. The experience of the movies has always been that the people who are developed in the medium contribute nine out of ten of the great successes, and I suspect that the radio will also find this to be true.

These are notes on the radio as pure entertainment. Considering how vigorously entertainment is sought after by the radio, it is remarkable how unimportant the subject is, because the radio as a power of propaganda, the radio as a means of satisfying adult interest, and the radio as advertising, are really much more significant. Concerning the first and the last of these there is nothing new to be said. As satisfaction for adult interest, apart from providing the equivalent of an eye-and-ear show in the theatre, the radio is still almost completely dependent on accidents. If the radio catches something important, the result is good. What the radio itself arranges is usually pretty thin stuff.

GILBERT SELDES.

CORRESPONDENCE

Russian Loans

SIR: When a correspondent in your issue of March 11 wrote that Russia has paid all of its obligations in this country, he was ill informed. Russia owes millions of unpaid bonds in this country which she has repudiated. This is one of the reasons why President Hoover is opposed to recognizing the Soviet Republic.

Let Russia redeem herself by recognizing her obligations, and thereby pave the way for recognition by this country.

I can speak from personal experience. I bought $6,000 worth of Russian government bonds during the War. With the advent of the Bolshevist government the bonds declined rapidly, and I was glad to sell them on the Curb at a loss of 70 percent. Since then the bonds have declined more and are seldom quoted. The last sale was on the Curb Exchange, March 5, when $5,000 of the 6½-percent issue, sold for the insignificant sum of $13.75, or $2.75 each.

It might be of interest to know that Russia also owes French investors $3,000,000,000. This the French hope to get some day in this ever changing world.

Denver, Col. AUGUST FAST.

[The present Russian government has met all its own obligations, although it has repudiated those of its predecessors. Our correspondent was speaking of the good faith of the Soviet government in carrying on its own operations.—THE EDITORS.]

When a Scotchman Starts Giving

SIR: As a cure for the present depression, certain panaceas have been suggested—old-age pensions, insurance against unemployment, even the dole system—but these smack so strongly of socialism as to be repugnant to every red-blooded American. The solution I am proposing is free from such objection. It would be endorsed with equal readiness by the American Legion, the D. A. R. and the left-wing Communists.

From time immemorial military service has been considered the highest service a citizen could render to the State. Military heroes have been a privileged class, and deservedly so. The nation's gratitude has been shown partly by turning over to them most of the political offices, and partly in the form of a bonus, compensation, adjusted compensation and readjusted compensation. Within a comparatively recent period the scope of such reward has been enlarged to include their dependents and their descendants. My plan simply goes a bit further and provides for the extension of this principle. Under it those whose ancestors fought in any war, in any part of the world, would be entitled to compensation. This would include the Trojan War, the Punic Wars, the Crusades, the Thirty Years' War and other wars whose names I am unable to recall.

Not the least merit of my plan is its absolute simplicity. A mere statement by the voter himself that, to the best of his knowledge and belief, so help him God, one of his ancestors fought in a war a hundred, or a thousand, or ten thousand years ago, would establish his claim for remuneration. I first thought of including interest, compounded semiannually from the date of such ancestor's war service down to the present time; but one of my neighbors pointed out the difficulty of ascertaining the rate of exchange between the United States and, say, Macedonia during the reign of Philip or Alexander. At any rate this feature may well be left for future consideration.

Wheeling, W. Va. W. C. MCGREGOR.

Mr. Fish Down South

SIR: The American Civil Liberties Union was attacked several times at some length by Congressman Hamilton Fish in one of the series of talks on Communism in the United States which he gave here this afternoon before a large audience of women. Mr. Fish has been giving a number of these talks throughout the South recently, this being the third he has delivered in Louisville since his arrival two days ago. "Ninety percent of the efforts of the American Civil Liberties Union are on behalf of Communists," said Mr. Fish, "and these are the kind of people who actually appear before bodies of women like this and oppose the deportation of Communists."

Referring to a recent debate with Arthur Garfield Hays, Mr. Fish said with great indignation that when "Mr. Hays, a gentleman of Jewish origin, with no right to the use of any of the names of the three Presidents he bears, questioned my Americanism, I had the pleasure of referring him to my report on the American Civil Liberties Union deploring the use of the word 'American' in the name of that organization."

The Scripps-Howard newspapers, "which might just as well be printed in Moscow," and the "college professors," divided honors with the Civil Liberties Union in receiving Mr. Fish's attacks. The Socialists he drowned in ridicule. "All that is left of the

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Socialist party is a few partisan preachers, some pink college professors and a large number of sobbing sister Socialists who own pearl necklaces and have Liberty Bonds in the bank."

There is a tendency among many liberals to treat Mr. Fish and his agitation against Reds as a joke. This is a great mistake. The importance of Mr. Fish's speaking tour and radio addresses by which he has already reached the ears of hundreds of thousands of persons cannot be overemphasized. It is the beginning of a great campaign to stir up the prejudices of the American people in preparation for the time when they will again be called upon in the name of Liberty and Democracy to turn over the young men of the country to be destroyed and corrupted by the horrors and degradations of modern warfare.

Anyone who went through the Hun-hating campaign of the last War must recognize the signs of war-whooping in Mr. Fish's lurid "horror" stories of the convict camps in Russia, where "unspeakable atrocities" are taking place, and in his playing upon the religious and moral prejudices by stories of the destruction of the church and home in Russia. He told the audience that the Communists are "destroying the souls of little children," and said that in the Communist camps in this country, "all kinds of vice are permitted and encouraged among the children as a means of destroying the influence of the home."

A person with reasonable intelligence, some knowledge of current events and an open mind who listened closely to Mr. Fish's remarks must have come to conclusions that would have greatly shocked Mr. Fish. Unfortunately if there were any such people present, they kept silent. One thing he made quite clear was that his opposition to Communism came from his position as a retainer and beneficiary of the government "of wealth, by wealth and for wealth," to use the Communist phrases which Mr. Fish quoted.

Louisville, Ky. HOLLACE RANSDELL.

Molecular Indeterminism

SIR: I have read with interest Mr. Benjamin Ginzburg's letter in your issue of April 15 criticizing my review of his "Adventure of Science." There are three questions involved—what scientists ought to think, what they do think, the effect of what they think upon general philosophical speculation.

I was not concerned in my review to say that scientists were right or wrong in supposing that the principle of causality did actually apply to individual molecules in the kinetic theory of gases. I was merely insisting that determinism in this matter would once have been taken for granted by every scientist as a matter of faith, and that it is something new in the scientific outlook for scientists to take seriously a principle of indeterminism. I think Mr. Ginzburg's analysis of the situation is probably correct, but I do not see how it affects my original point that scientists have, in fact, changed their minds on a matter of fundamental philosophical import.

Philadelphia, Pa. W. B. CURRY.

Autocracy in Samoa

SIR: So far as I am aware your journal has overlooked the good fortune that is being prepared for the natives of American Samoa as a result of the investigations of the joint committee of Congress which visited those islands last fall. Senator Hiram Bingham, chairman of the commission, is quoted in The United States Daily of October 25, 1930, as having reported in person to President Hoover that the naval administration which has functioned in the islands for the past thirty years is "the most unlimited autocracy the world has ever seen," albeit a benevolent one. He then described as follows one of the lamentable results of this autocratic rule: "There is no such thing as poverty in Samoa, because everyone belongs to a group or clan with a chief at its head who is responsible for their welfare."

Evidently the commission regarded this way of living as based upon ignorance rather than viciousness, for in the summary of its final report published in The United States Daily of January 10, 1931, we read that it recommends for the Samoans "a form of government flexible in nature, which will allow them to develop themselves, should they so choose, away from their present communal system of social organization and property into one more completely in tune with American civilization. . . ."

Recalling the history of Hawaii, where, by the way, Senator Bingham grew up, and of how rapidly a system of government and jurisprudence "in tune with American civilization" transformed the feudal organization of property there into a capitalistic one under which the foreigners had all and the Hawaiians nothing, one wonders whether the bill of rights, legislature and judicial system now in preparation for Samoa are possibly designed to have the same result. Is it possible that that benevolent naval autocracy has been too sympathetic to the existing communal system under which there "is no such thing as poverty?"

JULIUS W. PRATT.

University of Buffalo, Buffalo, N. Y.

Mrs. Woolf's Grandfather

SIR: More power to Mr. Josephson for his fine notice of Virginia Woolf. But he credits her with the wrong grandfather, unless there be such a relation as a step-grandfather. Leslie Stephen's first wife, Minnie Thackeray, died in 1875. Three years later, he married Mrs. Herbert Duckworth, an intimate friend of the whole Thackeray clan. Virginia Woolf is her daughter.

ALICE HENRY.

Santa Barbara, Calif.

Unionizing West Virginia Miners

SIR: It may be of interest to your readers to know there is a healthy unionizing campaign now in progress in the coal camps of West Virginia. As a result, all the terrorist tactics of the coal operators, about which so much has been written in the past, have again been set in motion by the coal operators. As I write, scores of families are scheduled for eviction and already families have had their possessions dumped out of company-owned houses onto the creek bottoms. Still other scores of families have moved to escape eviction.

Mine workers are summarily discharged for union affiliation and simultaneously ordered out of the coal camps. Dismissal from work has also taken place where coal diggers do not spend all of their meager earnings at the company store, where prices run from 30 to 50 percent higher than in the independent market. Wages are such that slow starvation of miners' whole families is common and admitted by some operators even while the miners are employed. The condition of the victimized miners is impossible to describe. The encouraging aspect of the situation is that the miners, in spite of obstacles, are building a union, which, because of some peculiar competitive features of this field, has an excellent chance of success.

This union, the West Virginia Mine Workers, was created when the "reorganized" miners' Union went back to the old United Mine Workers and left this district, which had been organizing for a year in the new union, high and dry in the midst of its campaign and with heavy strike bills overdue that had been negotiated with the approval of John Walker, then secretary of the reorganized union and now president of the Illinois District, U. M. W. of A. The West Virginia Mine Workers are headed by Frank Keeney and a group who organized this field in the old days and kept it intact until they were forced out of office by John L. Lewis, who heads the national U. M. W. of A.

The union's success here will depend on its ability to get its case before the public and on the financial support it may be given by all those forces in America which believe in honest progressive unionism rather than the obvious racketeering that has caused the disintegration of the miners' and other unions in America.

Money is urgently needed and so are clothes for men, women and children. Contributions of any kind will be greatly appreciated by the miners here. Communications to the union may be addressed to George Scherer, Secretary, West Virginia Mine Workers, Room 9, Old Kanawha Valley Bank Building, Charleston, West Virginia.

Charleston, W. Va. TOM TIPPETT.

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Socialization vs. Socialism

America's Way Out: A Program for Democracy, by Norman Thomas. New York: The Macmillan Company. 324 pages. $2.50.

MANY YEARS ago Professor Huxley, in applying the theory of evolution to ethics, made a distinction between the cosmic process, by which the physical nature of man has been determined through competition in the struggle for existence resulting in the survival of the fittest, and the ethical process, by virtue of which society came into existence through the principle of coöperation and mutual aid among men. Mr. Thomas undertakes to give an account of the means by which the ethical process may be continued and accelerated, not by the concentration of economic power in the hands of a possessing class, not by the catastrophe of war, either among rival groups of this class in control of nations or of the non-possessing masses everywhere against these groups, but by the socialization of economic and political power, making industry and the state alike serve the only purpose for which in reason they can be conceived to exist, the promotion of general welfare.

Socialism as propounded by Karl Marx was the result of the reading of the Darwinian hypothesis into social science. Indeed, the method of Marx bears a striking resemblance to that of Darwin in the wide observation of phenomena, the patient selection and assembling of data, and the drawing of conclusions which seemed to express a fundamental determinism. In this way Marx gave authority to his concepts of surplus value appropriated by the capitalist, of the increasing concentration of capital and the increasing insecurity and misery of the proletariat, of the economic interpretation of history, and the class war. Mr. Thomas has grown up in a new period of evolutionary thought in which the mutation theory of the origin of species has modified Darwin's idea of variation by accumulation of infinitesimal changes, and in which will and intelligence are recognized as having a place in development. He has renounced both the strength and the weakness of Marxism. Undoubtedly Marxian socialism owed much of its impact to the dogmatism which was the result of the comprehensiveness of its theory. Faith in the inevitable has always been a fighting force, whether among Norsemen, Arabs or Puritans. The decline of socialist parties today is doubtless due in part to the loss of the organizing power of dogma. On the other hand, it may be argued that the seeds of weakness were in the Marxian system itself, revealed by criticism which found increasing disparity between its theory and the facts. Mr. Thomas has undertaken to broaden the base of socialism by defining it as a process of socialization. He does not offer blue prints of the socialist state or of syndicalized industry, but rather suggests the measures which may be initiated and carried forward in a society which possesses the principles of democratic control and representative institutions, although unhappily without intelligence to use them. Social intelligence can come only through experience in socialization. Thus, Mr. Thomas is concerned with tendencies rather than with ultimate forms. "The great experiment of life discovers for us principles and gives us a sense of direction; it does not reveal final ends for generations yet unborn."

Norman Thomas's book is a forecast of such experience in terms of American character, environment and historical development. Some ten years ago Mr. Bertrand Russell in his "Roads to Freedom" indicated three possible directions which the process of socialization might take, in Anarchy, Syndicalism and Socialism. Mr. Thomas rejects the first because it does not offer sufficient "constructive organizing force for the machine age." He rejects the second on the ground that it "would tend to harden industrial divisions which should be fluid in a time of rapid technological change." Moreover, it is concerned chiefly with men as producers, whereas it is upon the distribution and consumption of what is produced that the good life depends. Communism he regards as too rigid a form of social organization, too absolute in its control of all cultural forces, school, press, art, as well as of economic opportunity, to be imposed on a people with the characteristics and traditions of Americans. He rejects the myth of the state as a repository of divine right. "The state is valuable not as a mysterious sovereignty, but as a useful organization for serving the collective interests of men. It does not and cannot serve all their interests. . . . It cannot lay a claim on men's loyalty on any basis essentially different in kind from other human associations." In order to become an organ of general welfare, however, the state must cease to be a source of special privilege, must cease to be thought of as such. Economic power in the hands of private business naturally dominates politics today, and through the schools determines our attitude toward the state. To change this attitude there is necessary, not only education in the theory of government, but practical experience of the several benefits which will result from the socialization of its powers. Government to the ordinary individual today means coercion, a system of prohibitions enacted into laws. To interpret government in its original meaning of steering, rather than forbidding, is the aim of education in socialism.

While government should be essentially an engine of direction and planning, it is natural that it should exercise control, in the interest of the general good, over what we properly call utilities, food supply, basic industry, and all things essential to the sustaining of human life on this earth. It is unnecessary to point out that this does not mean handing over the management of these matters to a city government headed by Walker or Thompson, a state government headed by Small or Bilbo, a national government headed by Harding or Hoover. In the first place, if we thought of the public good as having the importance which we attribute to our private affairs, we should not trust these persons in the one case any more than in the other. If the state were rightly understood, such characters in office would be as unthinkable as Al Capone in the presidency of the W. C. T. U. In the second place, political government would enter into the administration of the essential functions of society, not by legislatures and courts, but through commissions of experts, and expert managers. To unite the popular will as to the desired ends with technological skill as to the means of reaching them is, as Bernard Shaw has pointed out, the problem of democracy. To its solution is necessary the education of the people, first in their own welfare, and second in submission of opinion to expert guidance.

Mr. Thomas's subtitle is an indication that he interprets socialism as an extension of the democratic process. The obtaining by the people of the economic control necessary to their wellbeing is the most important objective of political effort; it is the only way in which to give meaning to democracy; but the accomplishment of this result by revolutionary violence and a dictatorship he regards as beyond visible or imaginable possibilities in the United States.

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Furthermore, holding that the welfare of the individual is inseparable, both psychologically and practically, from freedom to choose among the goods of life, he does not see it achieved through the denial of freedom. "One of the chief problems of the socialist state," he insists, "is to establish collective control without conscription." He believes that the progress of socialization must depend on the extension of education and conviction, to which the circulation of ideas through freedom of speech and press is essential. This method does not exclude revolution, but it is revolution by consent, not by violence.

It is, of course, necessary to inquire what reasons Mr. Thomas can give for his faith. He points out truly enough that socialization is implicit in human society and has already gained considerable ground. "Indeed," he says, "when one remembers the obstacles against which socialism has made its way, the power to cajole and coerce which lay in the hands of the capitalist class, the strength of nationalism and the mighty educational force in the hands of the nationalist and capitalist state, it is an astounding thing that socialism has made the progress it has in man's thought and has won directly and by indirect pressure such concessions to social control as have been won from the older capitalism even in the United States." It is true, however, that no new social order has ever come into being while the old one was in full strength and vigor. The Roman imperial system was in process of dissolution when it gave way to feudalism; and feudalism was thoroughly honeycombed before it gave way to capitalism. If capitalism showed no signs of decay, if it were manifestly capable of meeting the explicit needs of the world today, it would be useless to talk of revolution. But on every side the signs become apparent of the sickness of a society founded upon the acquisitive instinct and impelled by the profit motive. On one hand, we have predatory crime and the "racket," in parody of the methods of business. On the other, we find government dominated by special privilege responsible for, and quite unequal to dealing with, crises in economy which mean dislocation, privation and premature death to masses of men and women. It is to be noted that the rudimentary social conscience which speaks through public opinion is no longer patient with this state of affairs. The sense of social responsibility has grown far beyond the stage when Swift could with savage plausibility recommend turning the children of the poor into the food supply of the rich, or Carlyle could point to the shooting of paupers instead of partridges as a sport for the nobility.

It is becoming clear that the support of a social order which will maintain for its members standards of life and of living, of elementary comfort, security, education and recreation, which no one will assert are excessive, will prove too expensive for an economy subject to the waste of management for profit under the capitalist state. The burden of private property through necessary taxation, as in Great Britain, will go far to accelerate the revolution by consent. But if a certain inevitability gives reason and assurance to Mr. Thomas's faith, it is all the more a militant faith. In a time of changing social order great catastrophes may occur. The fear will not be exorcised that capitalism may in its desperation turn again to universal war, and in its ruin involve the whole fabric of Western civilization. There never was a time when penetrating social criticism and unselfish social action were more needed. Not this book only, but the career of which it is the present outcome, mark Norman Thomas as a leader in both fields.

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

Beyond the Talking

The Road Back, by Erich Maria Remarque. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. $2.50.

THERE is a victory beyond defeat which the victorious know nothing of. A bourne, a shore of refuge beyond the lost battles, the bronze names and the lead tombs, guarded and indicated not by the triumphant and man-limbed goddess with palm and sword, but by some musing and motionless handmaiden of despair itself.

Man does not seem to be able to stand very much prosperity; least of all does a people, a nation. Defeat is good for him, for it. Victory is the rocket, the glare, the momentary apotheosis at right angles with time and so doomed: a bursting diffusion of sparks at the last, dying and dead, leaving a word perhaps, a name, a date, for the tedium of children in primary history. It is the defeat which, serving him against his belief and his desire, turns him back upon that alone which can sustain him: his fellows, his racial homogeneity; himself; the earth, the implacable soil, monument and tomb of sweat.

This is beyond the talking, the hard words, the excuses and the reasons; beyond the despair. Beyond that dreadful desire and need to justify the disaster and give it significance by clinging to it, explaining it, which is the proven best way to support the inescapable. Victory requires no explanation. It is in itself sufficient: the fine screen, the shield; immediate and final: it will be contemplated only by history. While the whole contemporary world watches the defeat and the undefeated who, because of that fact, survived.

That's where the need to talk, to explain it, comes from. That's why Remarque puts into the mouths of characters speeches which they would have been incapable of making. It's not that the speeches were not true. If the characters had heard them spoken by another, they would have been the first to say, "That is so. This is what I think, what I would have said if I had just thought of it first." But they could not have said the speeches themselves. And this method is not justified, unless a man is writing propaganda. It is a writer's privilege to put into the mouths of his characters better speech than they would have been capable of, but only for the purpose of permitting and helping the character to justify himself or what he believes himself to be, taking down his spiritual pants. But when the character must express moral ideas applicable to a race, a situation, he is better kept in that untimed and unsexed background of the choruses of Greek senators.

But perhaps this is a minor point. Perhaps it is a racial fault of the author, as the outcome of the War was due in part to a German racial fault: a belief that a mathematical calculation would be superior to the despair of cornered rats. Anyway, Remarque justifies himself: ". . . I try to console him. What I say does not convince him, but it gives me some relief. . . . It is always so with comfort."

It is a moving book. Because Remarque was moved by the writing of it. Granted that his intent is more than opportunism, it still remains to be seen if art can be made of authentic experience transferred to paper word for word, of a peculiar reaction to an actual condition, even though it be vicarious. To a writer, no matter how susceptible he be, personal experience is just what it is to the man in the street who buttonholes him because he is a writer, with the same belief, the same conviction of individual significance: "Listen. All you have to do is write

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it down as it happened. My life, what has happened to me. It will make a good book, but I am not a writer myself. So I will give it to you. If I were a writer myself, had the time to write it down myself. You won't have to change a word." That does not make a book. No matter how vivid it be, somewhere between the experience and the blank page and the pencil, it dies. Perhaps the words kill it.

Give Remarque the benefit of the doubt and call the book a reaction to despair. Victory has its despairs, too, since the victorious not only do not gain anything, but when the hurrah dies away at last, they do not even know what they were fighting for, what they hoped to gain, because what little percentage there was in the whole affair, the defeated got it. If Germany had been victorious, this book would not have been written. And if the United States had not got back its troops 50-percent intact, save for the casual cases of syphilis and high metropolitan life, it would not be bought (which I hope and trust that it will be) and read. And it won't be the American Legion either that will buy the 40,000 copies, even if there are forty thousand of them that keep their dues paid up.

It moves you, as watching a child making mud pies on the day of its mother's funeral moves you. Yet at the end there is still that sense of missing significance, the feeling that, like so much that emerges from a losing side in any contest, and particularly from Germany since 1918, it was created primarily for the Western trade, to sell among the heathen like colored glass. From beyond the sentimentality, the defeat and the talking, this fact at least has emerged: America has been conquered not by the German soldiers that died in French and Flemish trenches, but by the German soldiers that died in German books.

WILLIAM FAULKNER.

The Engineer as Poet

New Russia's Primer: The Story of the Five Year Plan, by M. Ilin. Translated by George S. Counts and Nucia P. Lodge. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 162 pages. $1.75.

COMRADE ILIN, an engineer poet, has written for the children of Russia the story of the Five Year Plan: its goals, its methods, its triumphs and its difficulties. The Book of the Month Club has taken this primer, admirably edited by Dr. Counts, and distributed it to tens of thousands of adult Americans. Thus little Russians and grown-up Americans can go to the same school. Does this represent a fair commentary on the two civilizations? It does. The chief medium of adult education in this great republic—certainly for those not subscribers to the Book-of-the-Month Club—is the movies, tuned deliberately to twelve-year-old mentality, and concerned with a world that never was on land or sea. Russian children meanwhile are devoting their attention to electric power, conservation, exploration of natural resources, machine production, tractor farming, economic geography and the historical backgrounds of capitalism and socialism—a fare calculated to give the average movie fan acute indigestion.

Does this mean that Russians are innately more intelligent than Americans? No. It means that for Russians the world is exciting, stimulating, challenging, calling forth their interest and enthusiasm. The world for most Americans is dull and uninspiring, wracked with frightful economic insecurity. They are helping to build nothing; the imagination retreats defeated, sucking what bitter nourishment it may from the sawdust gruels of Hollywood.

Comrade Ilin is the philosopher-engineer about whom I have so long been dreaming. He is a sound technician, yet sees his work in the framework of continents and centuries; he sees it as part of a great integrated process, designed with unremitting single-mindedness for the abolition of poverty and human misery. This vision, this awareness of his place in the scheme of things, has made him a poet as well as a philosopher. (Perhaps the two terms in the last analysis are interchangeable.) He writes with the effective simplicity of Ernest Hemingway, though his subject matter is not so tortured and distraught. Here is a sample of his style:

> A great plan men have conceived, a great task they have set themselves. To change Nature and to change themselves. Are we, such as we are, fit for the new way of life? We know little; we have few engineers, few physicians, few scientists; half of us above eight years of age in the village cannot even read. We need factories not only to refine iron and steel. We also need factories to refine people. We need schools, universities, libraries, cottage reading rooms; we need books and newspapers—many times more than we have now. . . . We must root out uncouthness and ignorance, we must change ourselves, we must become worthy of a better life. And this better life will not come as a miracle: we ourselves must create it. But to create it we need knowledge; we need strong hands, yes, but we need strong minds, too.

The primer begins with a string of Arabic numerals taken at random from the fat printed volume of the Five Year Plan. Cold symbols, incomprehensible to children. Wait! Into these symbols we shall breathe the breath of life. Wait, my children, you shall see what high adventure these figures mean. Then, with stirring romance tempered by scrupulous fidelity to physical fact, our engineer poet proceeds to a description of the economic life of Russia, its sullen background, the changes which have been accomplished, the changes which the Five Year Plan proposes, the grievous difficulties—like dragons in a fairy story—which must be overcome, the specific things which the child can do to slay the dragons and bring the story to a happy end.

We start with the conception of planning, and the sad misfortunes of Mr. Fox and Mr. Box and Mr. Nox, manufacturers of hats, in a land where there is no planning, and where overproduction, unemployment, waste, take their unremitting toll. We proceed to the scouts of the Five Year Plan, the scientists who swarmed all over Russia and Siberia, looking for coal, iron, water power and oil, the foundation of natural resources upon which the Plan was reared. Every child must also learn to be a scout. "The youngsters of Ribousk while studying their own region found deposits of lime entirely suited for use as fertilizer. The Novosiberian Pioneers discovered resources worth many millions of rubles. They started out on a scouting expedition and stumbled upon beds of coal and iron. The Pioneers of the Lisvensky factory constructed a water and windmill and started a dynamo."

The story marches across the grand divisions of the economic front: electric power, greatest of all; iron and steel, coal, chemicals, wheat, giant farms and collectives, lumber, transportation. It ends with "A Fragment from a Book to Be Written Fifty Years Hence," when there will be no more dirty, crowded cities ("a city of one hundred thousand will be too big"); no more mud-plastered, stinking peasant huts—indeed, the distinction between rural and industrial worker will have disappeared; when "factories

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will not be brought together in one center as at present, they will be distributed throughout the country according to a rational plan"; when poverty shall have made its ugly bow and disappeared forever.

Fifty years. Ten Five Year Plans, one arching into the next. Will the great spans break? Who knows, and for the moment, who cares? It is enough for little children and for philosopher-engineers to rear them towering into the blue sky. STUART CHASE.

Man in the Making

New Discoveries Relating to the Antiquity of Man, by Sir Arthur Keith. New York: W. W. Norton and Company. 512 pages. $5.

IN THIS appendix to the 1929 revised edition of "The Antiquity of Man," Sir Arthur Keith discusses the problems of man's evolution in the light of new discoveries and interpretations. That the researches of the past five years should be able to supply enough factual material for a pithy and unembellished book of five hundred pages, is proof that the science of anthropology is making progress. The study of the rise of man from apelike ancestors has been retarded, perhaps more than any other major branch of paleontology, by the extreme rarity of fossil remains. Moreover, in many cases where actual specimens of primitive men have been recovered, authorities have disagreed on the interpretation of geologic age, anatomy and biologic affiliations. Anthropology has moved in a cloud of conjecture and controversy. This latest book by England's leading anthropologist demonstrates that the field of guessing and arguing, while still broad, has been significantly limited by a really remarkable accumulation of facts. These relate not only to newly discovered races, but to others which have been vaguely comprehended for a long time.

The author conducts his readers on a tour of the world in the footsteps of the bone diggers. Such a method of presentation recaptures some of the thrills of discovery, but necessitates jumping back and forth in a bewildering way through a quarter of a million years of human history. The first six chapters deal with the very ancient skull of *Australopithecus,* unearthed in 1924 from a cave near Taungs, South Africa. In these chapters Sir Arthur once more demonstrates his capacity as scientist and gentleman. With consummate astuteness and consideration for conflicting opinions, he weighs the humanoid against the anthropoid characteristics of this interesting skull, and concludes that the Taungs "man" was a Pleistocene ape, "extinct cousin of the gorilla and chimpanzee." The opinion of Professor Raymond Dart of Johannesburg, codiscoverer of *Australopithecus,* could hardly be at wider variance with Professor Keith's. Dart believes that the skull was entombed during the Pliocene epoch, more than 200,000 years earlier, and that it represents a prehuman stage of man's ancestry. Whatever benefits may derive from the discovery of this fossil, it does not now appear that exact definitions of either man or ape will be among them.

After remaining long enough to study more recent representatives of a few of the races that formerly occupied South Africa, the reader is taken to East Africa, where he is shown the bones of a newly discovered negroid race, contemporaries of the European Cromagnons. Next, in Galilee he sees the skull of a man who was not unlike the cave-dwelling Neanderthal men of Europe. The discovery of this fossil carries the history of Palestine far beyond the oldest records of Egypt or Babylonia. But here as elsewhere there is a gap between Neanderthal man and modern man, between hunting and agriculture, cave and village, that remains unfilled. Human history from 10,000 B. C. to 5500 B. C. is still largely a matter of conjecture.

From Palestine the trail leads to China and to the cave where the skull of *Sinanthropus,* the Peking Man, was recently exhumed. This creature stood at the threshold of humanity, and shares with *Pithecanthropus* of Java and the Piltdown man of England the honor of having lived about a quarter of a million years ago. *Sinanthropus* may prove to be an early Pleistocene ancestor of modern man, and in that case he will share with no other the distinction of being the most important fossil man ever discovered. From China, the reader is taken to Australia, where the discovery of the Cohuna skulls reveals one of the most primitive of all known races; thence to America, whose vast expanse has yielded but one fossil man of any unusual antiquity, the Punin skull of Ecuador. In Germany, on the other hand, the Ehringsdorf man is the most ancient Neanderthaler yet encountered. In Moravia, the encampments of the interesting mammoth hunters, contemporaries of the French Cromagnons, are examined in some detail. From his study of these people the author inclines to the view that southwestern Asia rather than North Africa was the cradle of modern man. Finally in England, a skull found beneath a London street is seen to suggest persistence of the ancient Piltdown type well into the upper reaches of Pleistocene time.

This book does not escape the burden of technical discussions wearisome to the lay reader, but it will prove highly interesting to those who want to learn the present state of knowledge regarding human evolution. Thanks to the industry, good judgment and good fortune of its devotees, anthropology has become a true science. The story of its recent accomplishments, so ably presented by Sir Arthur Keith, is worthy of any man's time.

JOHN HODGDON BRADLEY, JR.

Wordsworth: An Evaluation

Wordsworth, by Herbert Read. New York: Jonathan Cape and Harrison Smith. 271 pages. $3.

THOSE of us who read Wordsworth today suffer something of a handicap. The picture of the later Wordsworth comes between our eyes and the page; and our enjoyment of his liquid simplicity and his contemplation of natural phenonema is marred by the spectacle of a middle-aged poet laureate reciting the "Ecclesiastical Sonnets." There is in Wordsworth not a little mock grandeur; yet we come away from his work, and particularly from his shorter lyrics and sections of "The Prelude," with a genuine sense of satisfaction. A similar quality of satisfaction may be found today in the poetry of Robert Frost. Here is the same direct and forceful understatement of human drama, the same realistic attitude toward objects of nature, and much the same projection of highly individualized experience into something that resembles (but is never quite acceptable as) a universal philosophy.

Mr. Read sets out, in a critical biography, to redefine Wordsworth's contribution to the English Romantic movement. In so doing he presents what amounts to a complete revaluation of Wordsworth's poetry. He brushes aside the facile interpretations of his "pantheism" which have found favor in the college classroom. He proceeds directly to the source of Wordsworth's relationship to the French Revolution and builds him up anew. For it was during the Revolu-

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tion and in France that the poet made his first steps toward emotional maturity; and, as Mr. Read explains his case, the illicit love affair with Annette Vallon, though completely erased from all records of his subsequent private life, had a lasting effect upon his poetry. Mr. Read assumes with some justice that the revolutionary Wordsworth, an inarticulate young man, was primarily the eighteenth-century man of feeling. He says that we can recognize and experience Wordsworth's philosophy through its emotional power and not in terms of the intellect: thus, the important passages of "The Prelude" give us the *sensation* of thought through the medium of feeling. By this approach Mr. Read makes a plausible argument for Wordsworth's pretentious failure in "The Excursion," a poem which leans too heavily upon a concept of life expressed in philosophic terms. He reminds us that Wordsworth drew upon his personal experiences for poetic expression, not, of course, in an exact autobiographical sense, but as a source of emotion. As his emotions died, or were repressed (as in the case of Annette and her inextricable association with the French Revolution), his poetry declined.

Except for a few examples of excellent though purely academic research, among which Professor Arthur Beatty's is the most noteworthy, contemporary studies of Wordsworth have not been particularly nourishing. Mr. Read's critical portrait is an exception. Well rounded, thoughtfully conceived, carefully executed, it is likely to be regarded as the most convincing evaluation of the poet since Matthew Arnold's famous preface of 1879.

HORACE GREGORY.

Book Notes

BIOGRAPHY AND MEMOIRS

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI, by Dorothy Margaret Stuart. *English Men of Letters, New Series. New York: The Macmillan Company. 200 pages. $1.50.*

It is altogether fitting that Christina Rossetti's centenary should be celebrated by the inclusion of her biography in the English Men of Letters Series. An effective treatment of her secluded life is a bit difficult, for there is not very much to say, except that she wrote lyrical poetry of unusual quality and was a loyal member of the Rossetti famiiy. Fortunately, Miss Stuart makes no attempt to psychoanalyze her heroine out of existence; she utilizes what few facts are available and sums them up in an intelligent epilogue.

THE PINKERTONS, a Detective Dynasty, by Richard Wilmer Rowan. *Boston: Little, Brown and Company. 350 pages. $3.*

A fully documented history of the Pinkertons is still needed. Mr. Rowan devotes thirty-five pages to McParland and how he sent the Molly Maguires to the gallows, but only a hundred words to his part in the kidnapping of Moyer, Haywood and Pettibone—failing to state, moreover, that they were acquitted of the Steunenberg bombing. He writes nothing about the Pinkerton man hunts in Central America. His tragic chapter on Homestead is his best; the Pinkertons sent 310 armed men to a Carnegie strike scene on barges; they were met as the strikebreakers were at Herrin.

THE RUSSIAN DANCE OF DEATH, by Dirk Gora. *Claremont, California: The Key Books Publishers. 186 pages. $2.50.*

During the winter of 1919-20, when Anarchist bands were storming across the Ukraine in a war of the Blacks against both the Reds and the Whites, a precarious neutrality was maintained by the prosperous Dutch farmers, who had established their settlements more than a hundred years before in what had now become the heart of the Dnieper fighting zone. The sufferings endured by these Western settlers, chiefly at the hands of the Anarchists, are graphically and convincingly recorded in this diary of a former normal-school teacher. By interweaving the story of his personal experiences with the larger pattern of Russian history, the author has invested them with more than a local significance.

EDUCATION

HOLIDAY COURSES IN EUROPE, 1931. *Boston: The World Peace Foundation. 52 pages. $.50.*

This pamphlet, compiled by the League of Nations Institute of Intellectual Coöperation, is intended for students, teachers and others who wish to take advantage of the opportunities for study afforded by their vacations in Europe. It gives a list of the courses available to summer students, together with dates, subjects, prices and facilities for residence and travel.

THE EDUCATION OF THE WHOLE MAN, by L. P. Jacks. *New York: Harper and Brothers. 155 pages. $1.75.*

This book by the distinguished author of "The Legend of Smokeover" suffers from being a collection of separate addresses and essays. His doctrine is excellent: education must deal with the whole man, it must pay equal attention to mind and body, to manual and intellectual exercises, to work and to leisure; but these generalities fail to make their point, partly because of the author's own vagueness, partly because of his lurking but somewhat offensive upper-class consciousness. One has no doubt that Mr. Jacks's oral addresses were very effective: but what made them so was the dilution of an idea to the common level of the audience—a quality which robs the written word of its vitality.

HISTORY

THE END OF THE ANCIENT WORLD, by Ferdinand Lot. *Translated by Philip and Mariette Leon. History of Civilization Series. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 454 pages. $5.*

Following in the footsteps of such great predecessors as Montaigne and Gibbon, Professor Lot of the French Institute endeavors to narrate and explain the fall of the Roman Empire. The influence of modern historical conceptions is shown in his manner of treating Greco-Roman civilization as a whole, instead of dealing merely with its political, military or religious institutions, and in his emphasis on the economic causes of the long decline. Indeed, his most interesting chapter is that which deals with "The Economic Retrogression of the Roman World"; here he argues that the Roman economic system never reached a stage comparable with modern capitalism, and that the capital amassed by Roman senators and equestrians was rarely used for productive purposes. The chief defect of the book is that Professor Lot is not quite certain for whom he is writing. In part the writing is directed toward untrained readers, who will find it interesting and profitable; but in part it is also directed toward professional historians, and this explains why the author lays more stress on controversial topics and events than he does on giving a justly proportioned account of what happened between the accession of Diocletian and the fall of the Merovingian dynasty.

LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES, selected and annotated by G. G. Coulton. *New York: The Macmillan Company. 1041 pages, illustrated. $5.50.*

A reprint, in one volume, of Professor Coulton's entertaining and valuable anthology of medieval literature, previously published in four. The purpose of the anthology is not to preserve "gems," but to obtain from contemporary literature authentic illustrations of medieval life—its folklore, religion and superstition; its science, literature and arts; its manners, and descriptions of the monks, friars and nuns who played so important a part in its daily life. The excerpts, fortunately not too short to lose their individual character, are very well chosen. Professor Coulton's commentary is never obtrusive, always both helpful and interesting in its own right.

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GIN AND BITTERS, by A. Riposte (Elinor Mordaunt). *New York: Farrar and Rinehart. $2.50.*

Notwithstanding protestations of innocence in the foreword and on the jacket, this mild little parody must either stand or fall on its reputation as a pseudo-biography of the author of "Cakes and Ale." It has only spindly legs of its own, and even as a parody it falls pretty flat, the author's knowledge of Mr. Maugham apparently being confined to gossip and the internal evidence of his writings. The sum total is neither malicious enough to be amusing, nor penetrating enough to be of much interest.

THREE PAIRS OF SILK STOCKINGS, by Panteleimon Romanov. *New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.50.*

In a somewhat apologetic preface to his slipshod translation of this record of life and manners in contemporary Moscow, Stephen Graham remarks that whether or not a book should be translated from the Russian depends upon how well it answers the question, "How do the people live?" Leaving aside the value of such a criterion, which is at least debatable, there is no doubt that Mr. Romanov does give an illuminating and authoritative picture of the plight of the intellectual class under the Soviet regime. Hyppolit Kisliakov, a worker in the central museum, attempts with more or less success to adjust himself to the new order of things, but is forced, in the process, to throw overboard his intellectual integrity and cultural standards; he ends up in a morass of mental and moral degradation—as director of the museum, approved by the Communists as being more Communist than they are themselves. The matter-of-fact, unliterary presentation of the theme, and the bald recital of living conditions in Moscow, which is convincing and without great bias, make the book an uncommonly interesting one.

Contributors

VIRGIL JORDAN, formerly chief economist of the National Industrial Conference Board, is at present an economist with the McGraw-Hill Publishing Company.

H. N. BRAILSFORD, the well known British journalist, has returned to England after delivering a series of lectures in this country. He is a contributor to The New Leader, of which he was formerly editor, and to various other political and social journals.

JULIAN HUXLEY, biologist and writer, is the author of several volumes on scientific and general subjects, the most recent being a book of travel, "Africa View." He has contributed extensively to magazines and recently completed a lecture tour in this country.

WILLIAM FAULKNER'S book review of "The Road Back" is his first, but he speaks with the authority of one who has written an excellent novel on the same general theme, the aftermath of the War. "Soldier's Pay" was his first book, and partly established the reputation which has since been increased by "The Sound and the Fury," "As I Lay Dying" and "Sanctuary," the last of which was published this spring. Mr. Faulkner lives in Mississippi, where the scene of his later novels is laid.

STUART CHASE, who has been described as "an economist on the loose," visited Russia two years ago. Recently he returned from a trip to Mexico, where he collected material for his next book, "I Like Mexico," in which he will compare the social and economic structure of that country with the industrial structure of our own. His latest book, published by Macmillan, is "The Nemesis of American Business."

JOHN HODGDON BRADLEY, JR., now chairman of the Geology Department of the University of Southern California, is the author of "Parade of the Living," which Coward McCann published last autumn.

HORACE GREGORY is the author of a new translation of Catullus, which will be published this spring, and of a volume of verse, "Chelsea Rooming House."

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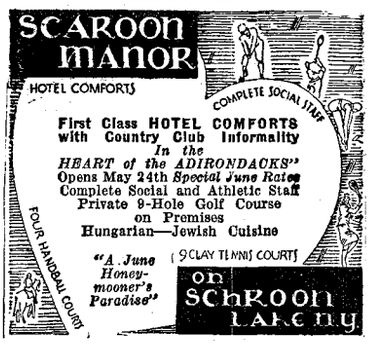
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